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ART MAGUIRE

SECRETARY PLIDGE

THE W. C. M. S.

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ART MAGUIRE;

OR,

THE BROKEN PLEDGE.

A NARRATIVE.

BY WILLIAM CARLETON

Author of "Traits and Stories of the Irish Peasantry," "The Miser,"
"Jane Sinclair," "Sports and Pastimes of the Irish People,"
"Valentine M'Clutchy," &c. &c.

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TO
THE VERY REV. THEOBALD MATHEW,
PROVINCIAL OF THE ORDER OF ST. FRANCIS, (OR CAPUCHINS)
IRELAND,
AS THE PROVIDENTIAL INSTRUMENT
OF PRODUCING AMONG HIS COUNTRYMEN
THE MOST WONDERFUL AND SALUTARY CHANGE
THAT HAS EVER BEEN RECORDED IN THE
MORAL HISTORY OF MAN,
THE
FOLLOWING FEEBLE ATTEMPT
AT ILLUSTRATING THE ADVANTAGES OF
THE GREAT PRINCIPLE
WHICH HIS PIOUS LABOURS AND UNEXAMPLED
ENERGY HAVE IMPRESSED ON HIS
AGE AND COUNTRY,
AND THE
MISERY CONSEQUENT ON VIOLATING ITS
OBLIGATIONS,
IS,
WITH A DEEP SENSE OF VENERATION AND RESPECT,
VERY HUMBLY INSCRIBED BY
THE AUTHOR.

PREFACE.

IN proposing to write a series of "Tales for the Irish People," the Author feels perfectly conscious of the many difficulties by which he is surrounded; and by which he may be still met in his endeavours to accomplish that important task. In order, however, to make every thing as clear and intelligible as possible, he deems it necessary, in the first place, to state what his object is in undertaking it. That object is, simply to improve their physical and social condition—generally; and through the medium of vivid and striking, but unobjectionable narratives, to inculcate such principles as may enable Irishmen to think more clearly, reason more correctly, and act more earnestly upon the general duties which, from their position in life, they are called upon to perform. With regard to those who feel apprehensive that any thing calculated to injure the doctrinal convictions of the Catholic people may be suffered to creep into these Tales, the Author has only to assure them that such an object

comes within the scope neither of his plan nor inclinations. It is not his intention to make these productions the vehicles of Theology or Polemics ; but studiously to avoid any thing and every thing that even approaches the sphere of clerical duty. His object, so far from that, is the inculcation of general, not peculiar, principles—principles which neither affect nor offend any creed, but which are claimed and valued by all. In this way, by making amusement the handmaiden of instruction, the Author believes it possible to let into the cabin, the farm-house, and even the landlord's drawing-room, a light by which each and all of them may read many beneficial lessons—lessons that will, it is hoped, abide with them, settle down in their hearts, and, by giving them a clearer sense of their respective duties, aid in improving and regenerating their condition.

To send to the poor man's fireside, through the medium of Tales that will teach his heart and purify his affections, those simple lessons which may enable him to understand his own value—that will generate self-respect, independence, industry, love of truth, hatred of deceit and falsehood, habits of cleanliness, order, and punctuality—together with all those lesser virtues which

help to create a proper sense of personal and domestic comfort—to assist in working out these healthful purposes is the Author's anxious wish—a task in which any man may feel proud to engage.

Self-reliance, manly confidence in the effect of their own virtues, respect for the *virtues* that *ought* to adorn rank, rather than for *rank itself*, and a spurning of that vile servility which is only the hereditary remnant of bygone oppression, will be taught the people in such a way as to make them feel how far up in society a high moral condition can and ought to place them. Nor is this all;—the darker page of Irish life shall be laid open before them—in which they will be taught, by examples that they can easily understand, the fearful details of misery, destitution, banishment, and death, which the commission of a single crime may draw down, not only upon the criminal himself, but upon those innocent and beloved connections whom he actually punishes by his guilt.

It is, indeed, with fear and trembling that the Author undertakes such a great and important task as this. If he fail, however, he may well say—

“Quem si non tenuit, tamen magnis excidit ausis.”

Still he is willing to hope that, through the aid of truthful fiction, operating upon the feelings of his countrymen, and on their knowledge of peasant life, he may furnish them with such a pleasing Encyclopedia of social duty—now lit up with their mirth, and again made tender with their sorrow—as will force them to look upon him as a benefactor—to forget his former errors—and to cherish his name with affection, when he himself shall be freed for ever from those cares and trials of life which have hitherto been his portion.

In the following simple narrative of "The Broken Pledge," it was his aim, without leading his readers out of the plain paths of every-day life, or into the improbable creations of Romance, to detail the character of such an individual as almost every man must have often seen and noticed within the society by which he is surrounded. He trusts that the moral, as regards both husband and wife, is wholesome and good, and calculated to warn those who would follow in the footsteps of "Art Maguire."

ART MAGUIRE ;

OR,

THE BROKEN PLEDGE.

It has been often observed, and as frequently inculcated, through the medium of both press and pulpit, that there is scarcely any human being who, how striking soever his virtues, or how numerous his good qualities may be, does not also carry in his moral constitution some particular weakness or failing, or, perhaps, vice, to which he is especially subject, and which may, if not properly watched and restrained, exercise an injurious and evil influence over his whole life. Neither have the admonitions of press or pulpit ended in merely laying down this obvious and undeniable truth, but, on the contrary, very properly proceeded to add, that one of the most pressing duties of man is to examine his own heart, in order to ascertain what this particular vice or failing in his case may be, in order that, when discovered, suitable means be taken to remove or overcome it.

The man whose history we are about to detail

for the reader's instruction, was, especially during the latter years of his life, a touching, but melancholy illustration of this indisputable truth ; in other words, he possessed the weakness, or the vice, as the reader may consider it, and found, when too late, that a yielding resolution, or, to use a phrase perhaps better understood, a good intention, was but a feeble and inefficient instrument with which to attempt its subjection. Having made these few preliminary observations, as being suitable, in our opinion, to the character of the incidents which follow, we proceed at once to commence our narrative.

Arthur, or, as he was more familiarly called by the people, Art Maguire, was the son of parents who felt and knew that they were descended from higher and purer blood than could be boasted of by many of the families in their neighbourhood. Art's father was a small farmer, who held about ten acres of land, and having a family of six children—three sons and as many daughters—he determined upon putting one or two of the former to a trade, so soon as they should be sufficiently grown up for that purpose. This, under his circumstances, was a proper and provident resolution to make. His farm was too small to be parcelled out, as is too frequently the case, into small miserable patches, upon each of which a young and inconsiderate couple are contented to sit down, with the prospect of rearing up and supporting a numerous family with wofully ina-

equate means; for although it is generally a matter of certainty that the families of those young persons will increase, yet it is a perfectly well known fact that the little holding will not, and the consequence is, that families keep subdividing on the one hand, and increasing on the other, until there is no more room left for them. Poverty then ensues; and as poverty in such cases begets competition, and competition crime, so we repeat that Condry Maguire's intention, as being one calculated to avoid such a painful state of things, was a proof of his own good sense and forethought.

Arthur's brother, Frank, was a boy not particularly remarkable for any peculiar brilliancy of intellect, or any great vivacity of disposition. When at school he was never in a quarrel, nor engaged in any of those wild freaks which are sore annoyances to a village schoolmaster, and daring outrages against his authority. He was consequently a favourite not only with the master but with all the sober, well-behaved boys of the school, and many a time has Teague Rooney with whom he was educated, exclaimed, as he addressed him:—

“Go to your sate, Frank, abouchal; faith, although there are boys endowed wid more brilliancy of intellect than has fallen to your lot, yet you are the very youth who understands what is due to legitimate authority, at any rate, an' that's no small gift in itself; go to your sate, sorrow,

taw will go to your *substratum* this bout, for not having your lesson ; for well I know it wasn't idleness that prevented you, but the natural sobriety and slowness of intellect you are gifted with. If you are slow, however, you are sure, and I'll pledge my reputaytion against that of the great O'Flaherty himself, that you and your bringer of a brother will both live to give a beautiful illustration of the celebrated race between the hare and the tortoise yet. Go to your sate with impunity, and tell your dacent mother I was enquiring for her."

Such, indeed, was a tolerably correct view of Frank's character. He was quiet, inoffensive, laborious, and punctual ; though not very social or communicative, yet he was both well-tempered and warm-hearted, points which could not, without considerable opportunities of knowing him, be readily perceived. Having undertaken the accomplishment of an object, he permitted no circumstance to dishearten or deter him in working out his purpose ; if he said it, he did it ; for his word was a sufficient guarantee that he would ; his integrity was consequently respected, and his resolution, when he expressed it, was seldom disputed by his companions, who knew that in general it was inflexible. After what we have said, it is scarcely necessary to add that he was both courageous and humane.

These combinations of character frequently occur. Many a man not remarkable for those

qualities of the head that impress themselves most strikingly upon the world, is nevertheless gifted with those excellent principles of the heart which, although without much show, and scarcely any noise, go to work out the most useful purposes of life. Arthur, on the contrary, was a contrast to his brother, and a strong one too, on many points; his intellect was far superior to that of Frank's, but, on the other hand, he by no means possessed his brother's steadiness or resolution. We do not say, however, that he was remarkable for the want of either—far from it: he could form a resolution, and work it out as well as his brother, provided his course was left unobstructed: nay, more, he could overcome difficulties many and varied, provided only that he was left unassailed by one solitary temptation—that of an easy and good-humoured vanity. He was conscious of his talents, and of his excellent qualities, and being exceedingly vain, nothing gave him greater gratification than to hear himself praised for possessing them—for it is a fact, that every man who is vain of any particular gift, forgets that he did not bestow that gift upon himself, and that instead of priding himself upon the possession of it, he should only be humbly thankful to the Being who endowed him with it.

Art was social, communicative, and, although possessing what might be considered internal resources more numerous, and of a far higher order than did his brother, yet, somehow, it was

clear that he had not the same self-dependence that marked the other. He always wanted, as it were, something to lean upon, although in truth he did not at all require it, had he properly understood himself. The truth is, like thousands, he did not begin to perceive, or check in time, those early tendencies that lead a heart naturally indolent, but warm and generous, to the habit of relying first, in small things, upon external sources and objects, instead of seeking and finding within itself those materials for manly independence, with which every heart is supplied, were its possessor only aware of the fact, and properly instructed how to use them.

Art's enjoyments, for instance, were always of a social nature, and never either solitary or useful in their tendencies; of this character was every thing he engaged in. He would not make a ship of water flaggons by himself, nor sail it by himself—he would not spin a top, nor trundle a hoop without a companion—if sent upon a message, or to dig a basket of potatoes in the field, he would rather purchase the society of a companion with all the toys or playthings he possessed than do either alone. His very lessons he would not get, unless his brother Frank got his along with him. The reader may thus perceive that he acquired no early habit of self-restraint, no principle of either labour or enjoyment within himself, and of course could acquire none at all of self-reliance. A social disposition in our

amusements is not only proper but natural ; for we believe it is pretty generally known that he who altogether prefers such amusements is found to be deficient in the best and most generous principles of our nature. Every thing, however, has its limits and its exceptions. Art, if sent to do a day's work alone, would either abandon it entirely, and bear the brunt of his father's anger, or he would, as we have said, purchase the companionship of some neighbour's son or child : for, provided he had *any one* to whom he could talk, he cared not ; and, having thus succeeded, he would finish it triumphantly.

In due time, however, his great prevailing weakness, vanity, became well known to his family, who, already aware of his peculiar aversion to any kind of employment that was not social, immediately seized upon it, and, instead of taking rational steps to remove it, they nursed it into stronger life, by pandering to it as a convenient means of regulating, checking, or stimulating the whole habits of his life. His family were not aware of the moral consequences which they were likely to produce by conduct such as this, nor of the pains they were ignorantly taking to lay the foundation of his future misfortune and misery.

" Art, my good boy, will you take your spade and clane out the remaindher o' that drain, between the Hannigans and us," said his father.

" Well, will Frank come ?"

" Sure you know he can't ; isn't he weedin' "

that bit of *blanther* in Crackton's park, an' afther that sure he has to cut scraws on the Pirl-hill for the new barn."

"Well, I'll help him if he helps me, isn't that fair? Let us join."

"Hut, get out o' that, avourneen; go yourself; do what you're bid, Art."

"Is it by myself? murdher alive, father, don't ax me; I'll give him my new *Cammon* if he comes."

"Throth you won't; the sorra hand I'd ever wish to see the same *Cammon* in but your own; faix, it's you that can handle it in style. Well now, Art, well becomes myself but I thought I could play a *Cammon* wid the face o' clay wanst in my time, but may I never sin if ever I could match *you* at it; oh, sorra taste o' your *Cammon* you must part wid; sure I'd rather scower the drain myself."

"Bedad I *won't* part wid it then."

"I'd rather, I tell you, scower it myself—an' I will too. Sure if I renew the ould cough an me I'll thry the *Casharawan*,* that did me so much good the last time."

"Well, that's purty! Ha, ha, ha! you to go! Oh, ay, indeed—as if I'd stand by an' let you. Not so bad as that comes to either—no. Is the spade an' shovel in the shed?"

"To be sure they are. Throth, Art, you're

* Dandelion,

worth the whole o' them—the sorra lie in it. Well, go, avillish."

Thus was this fine boy's weakness played upon by those who, it is true, were not at all conscious of the injury they were inflicting upon him at the time. He was certainly the pride of the family, and even whilst they humoured and increased this his predominant and most dangerous foible, we are bound to say that they gratified their own affection as much as they did his vanity.

His father's family consisted, as we have said, of three sons and three daughters. The latter were the elder, and in point of age Art, as we have said, was the youngest of them all. The education that he and his brothers received was such as the time and the neglected state of the country afforded them. They could all read and write tolerably well, and knew something of arithmetic. This was a proof that their education had not been neglected. And why should it? Were they not the descendants of the great Maguires of Fermanagh? Why, the very consciousness of their blood was felt as a proud and unanswerable argument against ignorance. The best education, therefore, that could be procured by persons in their humble sphere of life, they received. The eldest brother, whose name was Brian, did not, as is too frequently the case with the eldest sons of small farmers, receive so *liberal* a portion of instruction as Frank or Art. This resulted from the condition and necessities of his father, who

could not spare him from his farm—and indeed it cost the worthy man many a sore heart. At all events, time advanced, and the two younger brothers were taken from school with a view of being apprenticed to some useful trade. The character of each was pretty well in accordance with their respective dispositions. Frank had no enemies, yet was he by no means so popular as Art, who had many. The one possessed nothing to excite envy, and never gave offence; the other, by the very superiority of his natural powers, exultingly paraded as they were at the expense of dulness or unsuccessful rivalry, created many vindictive maligners, who let no opportunity pass of giving him behind his back the harsh word which they durst not give him to his face. In spite of all this, his acknowledged superiority, his generosity, his candour, and utter ignorance or hatred of the low chicaneries of youthful cunning, joined to his open, intrepid, and manly character, conspired to render him popular in an extraordinary degree. Nay, his very failings added to this, and when the battle of his character was fought, all the traditionary errors of moral life were quoted in his favour.

“Ay, ay, the boy has his faults, and who has not, I’d be glad to know? If he’s lively, it’s bettther to be that, than a *mosey*, any day. His brother Frank is a good boy, but sure divil a squig of spunk or spirits is in him; an’, my dear, you know the ould proverb, that a standing pool

always stinks, whilst the runnin' strame is sweet and clear to the bottom. If he's proud, he has a *right* to be proud, and why shouldn't he, seein' that it's well known he could take up more larnin' than half the school."

"Well, but poor Frank's a harmless boy, and never gave offence to mortual, which, by the same token, is more than can be said of Art the lad."

"Very well, we know all that; and maybe it 'ud be bettther for himself if he had a sharper spice of the *dioual* in him—but sure the poor boy hasn't the brain for it. Offence! oh, the dickens may seize the offence poor Frank will give to man or woman, barrin' he mends his manners, and gets a little life into him—sure he was a year and a day in the Five Common Rules, an' three blessed weeks gettin' the Multiplication Table."

Such, in general, was the estimate formed of their respective characters, by those, who, of course, had an opportunity of knowing them best. Whether the latter were right or wrong will appear in the sequel; but, in the mean time, we must protest even in this early stage of our narrative, against those popular exhibitions of mistaken sympathy, which in early life—the most dangerous period too—are felt and expressed for those, who, in association with weak points of character, give strong indications of talent. This mistaken generosity is pernicious to the individual, inasmuch as it confirms him in the very errors

which he should correct, and in the process of youthful reasoning, which is mostly selfish, induces him not only to doubt the whisperings of his own conscience, but to substitute in their stead the promptings of the silliest vanity.

Having thus given a rapid sketch of these two brothers in their school-boy life, we now come to that period at which their father thought proper to apprentice them. The choice of the trade he left to their own natural judgment, and as Frank was the eldest, he was allowed to choose first.— He immediately selected that of a carpenter, as being clean, respectable, and within doors; and, as he added—

“Where the wages is good—and then I am tould that one can work afther hours, if they wish.”

“Very well,” said the father, “now let us hear Art; come alanna, what are you on for?”

“I’ll not take any trade,” replied Art.

“Not take any trade, Art! why, my goodness, sure you knew all along that you war for a trade. Don’t you know when you and Frank grow up, and, of course must take the world on your heads, that it isn’t this strip of a farm that you can depend on.”

“That’s what I think of,” said Frank; “one’s not to begin the world wid empty pockets, or, any way, widout some ground to put one’s foot on.”

“The world!” rejoined Art; “why, what the

sorra puts thoughts o' the world into *your* head, Frank? Isn't it time enough for you or me to think o' the world these ten years to come?"

"Ay," replied Frank, "but when we come to join it, isn't the time to begin to think of it; don't you know what the ould saying says—*ha na la na guiha la na scuillaba*—it isn't on the windy day that you are to look for your scollaps.*"

"An' what 'ud prevent you, Art, from goin' to larn a trade?" asked his father.

"I'd rather stay with *you*," replied the affectionate boy; "I don't like to leave you nor the family to be goin' among strangers."

The unexpected and touching nature of his motive, so different from what was expected, went immediately to his father's heart. He looked at his fine boy, and was silent for a minute, after which he wiped the moisture from his eyes. Art, on seeing his father affected, became so himself, and added—

"That's my only *raison*, father, for not goin'; I wouldn't like to lave you an' them, if I could help it."

"Well, *acushla*," replied the father, whilst his eyes beamed on him with tenderness and affection, "sure we wouldn't ax you to go, if we could any

* The proverb inculcates forethought and provision. Scollop is an osier, sharpened at both ends, by which the thatch of a house, is fastened down to the roof. Of a windy day the thatch alone would be utterly useless if there were no scollaps to keep it firm.

way avoid it—it's for your own good we do it. Don't refuse to go, Art; sure for my sake you won't?"

"I will go, then," he replied: "I'll go for your sake, but I'll miss you all."

"An' we'll miss you, a hagar. God bless you, Art dear, it's jist like you. Ay will we in throth miss you; but, then, think what a brave fine thing it'll be for you to have a grip of a dacent independent trade, that'll keep your feet out o' the dirt while you live."

"I will go," repeated Art," but as for the trade, I'll have none but Frank's. I'll be a carpenter, for then he and I can be *together*."

In addition to the affectionate motive which Art had mentioned to his father—and which was a true one—as occasioning his reluctance to learn a trade, there was another, equally strong and equally tender. In the immediate neighbourhood there lived a family named Murray, between whom and the Maguires there subsisted a very kindly intimacy. Jemmy Murray was in fact one of the wealthiest men in that part of the parish, as wealth then was considered—that is to say, he farmed about forty acres, which he held at a moderate rent, and as he was both industrious and frugal, it was only a matter of consequence that he and his were well to do in the world. It is not likely, however, that even a passing acquaintance would ever have taken place between them, were it not for the consideration of the blood which was known to flow in the veins

of the Fermanagh Maguires. Murray was a good deal touched with purse pride—the most offensive and contemptible description of pride in the world—and would never have suffered an intimacy, were it not for the reason I have alleged. It is true he was not a man of such stainless integrity as Condry Maguire, because it was pretty well known that in the course of his life, while accumulating money, he was said to have stooped to practices that were, to say the least of them, highly discreditable. For instance, he always held over his meal, until there came what is unfortunately both too well known and too well felt in Ireland,—a dear year—a year of hunger, starvation, and famine. For the same reason he held over his hay, and indeed on passing his haggard you were certain to perceive three or four immense stacks, bleached by the sun and rain of two or three seasons into a tawney yellow. Go into his large kitchen or store-house, and you saw three or four immense deal chests filled with meal, which was reserved for a season of scarcity—for proud as Farmer Murray was, he did not disdain to fatten upon human misery. Between these two families there was, as we have said, an intimacy. It was wealth and worldly goods on the one side; integrity and old blood on the other. Be this as it may, Farmer Murray had a daughter Margaret, the youngest of four, who was much about the age of Arthur Maguire. Margaret was a girl whom it was al-

most impossible to know and not to love. Though then but seventeen, her figure was full, rich, and beautifully formed. Her abundant hair was black and glossy as ebony, and her skin, which threw a lustre like ivory itself, had—not the whiteness of snow—but a whiteness a thousand times more natural—a whiteness that was fresh, radiant, and spotless. She was arch and full of spirits, but her humour—for she possessed it in abundance—was so artless, joyous, and innocent, that the heart was taken with it before one had time for reflection. Added, however, to this charming vivacity of temperament were many admirable virtues, and a fund of deep and fervent feeling, which, even at that early period of her life, had made her name beloved by every one in the parish, especially the poor and destitute. The fact is, she was her father's favourite daughter, and he could deny her nothing. The admirable girl was conscious of this, but instead of availing herself of his affection for her in a way that many—nay, we may say, most—would have done, for purposes of dress or vanity, she became an interceding angel for the poor and destitute; and closely as Murray loved money, yet it is due to him to say, that, on these occasions, she was generally successful. Indeed, he was so far from being insensible to his daughter's noble virtues, that he felt pride in reflecting that she possessed them, and gave aid ten times from that feeling for once that he did from a more exalted

one. Such was Margaret Murray, and such, we are happy to say—for we know it—are thousands of the peasant girls of our country.

It was not to be wondered at, then, that in addition to the reluctance which a heart naturally affectionate, like Art's, should feel on leaving his relations for the first time, he should experience much secret sorrow at being deprived of the society of this sweet and winning girl.

Matters now, however, were soon arranged, and the time, nay, the very day for their departure was appointed. Art, though deeply smitten with the charms of Margaret Murray, had never yet ventured to breathe to her a syllable of love, being deterred naturally enough by the distance in point of wealth which existed between the families. Not that this alone, perhaps, would have prevented him from declaring his affection for her; but, young as he was, he had not been left unimpressed by his father's hereditary sense of the decent pride, strict honesty, and independent spirit, which should always mark the conduct and feelings of any one descended from the great Fermanagh Maguires. He might, therefore, probably have spoken, but that his pride dreaded a repulse, and *that* he could not bear to contemplate. This, joined to the natural diffidence of youth, sufficiently accounts for his silence.

There lived at the period of which we write, which is not a thousand years ago, at a place called "the Corner House," a celebrated carpen-

ter named Jack M'Carroll. He was unquestionably a first-rate mechanic, kept a large establishment, and had ample and extensive business.— To him had Art and Frank been apprenticed ; and, indeed, a better selection could not have been made, for Jack was not only a good workman himself, but an excellent employer, and an honest man. An arrangement had been entered into with a neighbouring farmer regarding their board and lodging, so that everything was settled very much to the satisfaction of all parties.

When the day of their departure had at length arrived, Art felt his affections strongly divided, but without being diminished, between Margaret Murray, and his family ; whilst Frank, who was calm and thoughtful, addressed himself to the task of getting ready such luggage as they had been provided with.

" Frank," said Art, " don't you think we ought to go and bid farewell to a few of our nearest neighbours before we lave home ?

" Where's the use of that ?" asked Frank, " not a bit, Art ; the best plan is jist to bid our own people farewell, and slip away without noise or nonsense."

" You may act as you please, Frank," replied the other, " as for me, I'll call on Jemmy Hanlon and Tom Connolly, at all events ; but hould," said he, abruptly, " ought I to do that ? Isn't it their business to come to us ?"

" It is," replied Frank, " and so they would

too, but that they think we won't start till Thursday ; for you know we didn't intend to go till then."

" Well," said Art, " that's a horse of another colour ; I *will* call on them ; wouldn't they think it heartless of us to go off *widout* seein' them ? An' besides, Frank, ~~why~~ *should* we steal away like thieves that ~~had~~ the hue and cry at their heels ? no, faith, ~~as~~ *sure* as we go at all, we'll go openly, an' ~~like~~ *men* that have nothing to be afraid of."

" *Very* well," replied his brother, " have it *your own way*, so far as *you're* consarned ; as for *me*, I look upon it all as mere nonsense."

It is seldom that honest and manly affection fails to meet its reward, be the period soon or late. Had Art been guided by Frank's apparent indifference—who, however, acted in this matter solely for the sake of sparing his brother's feelings—he would have missed the opportunity of being a party to an incident which influenced his future life in all he ever afterwards enjoyed or suffered. He had gone, as he said, to bid farewell to his neighbours, and was on his return home in order to take his departure, when who should he meet on her way to her father's house, after having called at *his* father's, " to see the girls," as she said with a slight emphasis upon the word *girls*, but Margaret Murray.

! As was natural and as they had often done before under similare cicumstances, each paused

on meeting, but somehow on this occasion there was visible on both sides more restraint than either had ever yet shown. At length, the preliminary chat having ceased, a silence ensued, which, after a little time, was broken by Margaret, who, Art could perceive, blushed deeply as she spoke.

"So, Art, you and Frank are goin' to lave us."

"It's not with my own consint *I'm* goin', Margaret," he replied. As he uttered the words he looked at her; their eyes met, but neither could stand the glance of the other; they were instantly withdrawn.

"I'll not forget my friends, at all events," said Art; "at least there's some o' them I won't, nor wouldn't either, if I was to get a million o' money for doin' so."

Margaret's face and neck, on hearing this, were in one glow of crimson, and she kept her eyes still on the ground, but made no reply. At length she raised them, and their glances met again; in that glance the consciousness of his meaning was read by both, the secret was disclosed, and their love told.

The place where they stood was in one of those exquisitely wild but beautiful green country lanes that are mostly enclosed on each side by thorn hedges, and have their sides bespangled with a profusion of delicate and fragrant wild flowers, whilst the pathway, from the unfrequency of feet,

is generally covered with short daisy-gemmed grass, with the exception of a trodden line in the middle that is made solely by foot passengers. Such was the sweet spot in which they stood at the moment the last glance took place between them.

At length Margaret spoke ; but why was it that her voice was such music to him *now* ? Musical and sweet it always was, and he had heard it a thousand times before, but why, we ask, was it now so delicious to his ear, so ecstatic to his heart ? Ah, it was that sweet, entrancing little charm which trembled up from her young and beating heart, through its softest intonations ; this low tremor it was that confirmed the tale which the divine glance of that dark, but soft and mellow eye, had just told him. But to proceed ; at length she spoke—

“ Arthur,” said the innocent girl, unconscious that she was about to do an act for which many will condemn her, “ before you go, and I know I will not have an opportunity of seein’ you again, will you accept of a keepsake from me ? ”

“ Will I ? oh, Margaret, Margaret ! ”—he gazed at her, but could not proceed, his heart was too full.

“ Take this,” said she, “ and keep it for *my* sake.”

He took it out of her hand, he seized the hand itself, another glance, and they sank into each other’s arms, each trembling with an excess of

happiness. Margaret wept. This gush of rapture relieved and lightened their young and innocent hearts ; and Margaret having withdrawn herself from his arms, they could now speak more freely. It is not our intention, however, to detail their conversation, which may easily be conjectured by our readers. On looking at the keepsake, Art found that it was a tress of her rich and raven hair, which, we may add here, he tied about his heart that day, and on that heart, or rather the dust of that heart, it lies on this.

It was fortunate for Art that he followed his brother's judgment in selecting the same trade. Frank, we have said, notwithstanding his coldness of manner, was by no means deficient in feeling or affection ; he possessed, however, the power of suppressing their external manifestations, a circumstance which not unfrequently occasioned it to happen that want of feeling was often imputed to him without any just cause. At all events, he was a guide, a monitor, and a friend to his brother, whom he most sincerely and affectionately loved ; he kindly pointed out to him his errors, matured his judgment by sound practical advice ; where it was necessary, he gave him the spur, and on other occasions held him in. Art was extremely well tempered, as was Frank also, so that it was impossible any two brothers could agree better, or live in more harmony than they did. In truth, he had almost succeeded in opening Art's eyes to the weak points in his

character, especially to the greatest, and most dangerous of all—his vanity, or insatiable appetite for praise. They had not been long in M'Carroll's establishment when the young man's foibles were soon seen through, and of course began to be played upon; Frank, however, like a guardian angel, was always at hand to advise or defend him, as the case might be, and as both, in a physical contest, were able and willing to fight their own battles, we need not say that in a short time their fellow-workmen ceased to play off their pranks upon either of them. Everything forthwith passed very smoothly; Art's love for Margaret Murray was like an apple of gold in his heart, a secret treasure of which the world knew nothing; they saw each other at least once a month, when their vows were renewed, and surely we need not say, that their affection on each subsequent interview only became more tender and enduring.

The period of Frank's and Art's apprenticeship had now nearly expired, and it is not too much to say that their conduct reflected the highest credit upon themselves. Three or four times, we believe, Art had been seduced in the absence of his brother, by the influence of bad company, to indulge in drink, even to intoxication. This during the greater part of a whole apprenticeship, considering his temperament, and the almost daily temptations by which he was beset, must be admitted on the whole to be a very mo-

derate amount of error in that respect. On the morning after his last transgression, however, apprehending, very naturally, a strong remonstrance from his brother, he addressed him as follows, in anticipation of what he supposed Frank was about to say:—

“Now, Frank, I know you’re going to scould me, and, what is more, I know I disarve all you could say to me; but there’s one thing you *don’t* know, an’ that is what I suffer for lettin’ myself be made a fool of last night. Afther the advices you have so often given me, and afther what my father so often tould us to think of ourselves, and afther the solemn promises I made to you—and that *I broke*, I feel as if I was nothin’ more or less than a disgrace to the name.”

“Art,” said the other, “I’m glad to hear you speak as you do; for it’s a proof that repentance is in your heart. I suppose I needn’t say that it’s your intention not to be caught by these fellows again.”

“By the sacred”—

“Whisht,” said Frank, clapping his hand upon his mouth, “there’s no use at all in rash oaths, Art. If your mind is made up honestly and firmly in the sight of God—and dependin’ upon his assistance, that is enough—and a great deal betther too, than a rash oath, made in a sudden fit of repentance—ay, before you’re properly recovered from your liquor. Now say no more, only promise me you wont do the like again.”

"Frank, listen to me—by all the—"

"Hould, Art," replied Frank, stopping him again; "I tell you once more, this rash swearin is a bad sign—I'll hear no rash oaths; but listen you to me; if your mind is made up against drinkin' this way again, jist look me calmly and steadily in the face, and answer me simply by yes or no. Now take your time, an' don't be in a hurry—be cool—be calm—reflect upon what you're about to say, and whether it's your solemn and serious intention to abide by it. My question 'ill be very short and very simple; your answer, as I said, will be merely *yes* or *no*. Will you ever allow these fellows to make you drunk again? Yes or no, an' not another word."

"No."

"That will do," said Frank. "Now give me your hand, and a single word upon what has passed you will never hear from me."

In large manufactories, and in workshops similar to that in which the two brothers were now serving their apprenticeship, almost every one knows that the drunken and profligate entertain an unaccountable antipathy against the moral and the sober. Art's last fit of intoxication was not only a triumph over himself, but what was still more, a triumph over his brother, who had so often prevented him from falling into their snares and joining in their brutal excesses. It so happened, however, that, about this precise period, Art had, unfortunately, contracted an intimacy

with one of the class I speak of, an adroit fellow with an oily tongue, vast powers of flattery, and still greater powers of bearing liquor—for Frank could observe that, notwithstanding all their potations, he never, on any occasion, observed him affected by drink, a circumstance which raised him in his estimation, because he considered that he was rather an obliging civil young fellow who complied so far as to give these men his society, but yet had sufficient firmness to resist the temptations to drink beyond the bounds of moderation. The upshot of all this was, that Frank, not entertaining any suspicion particularly injurious to Harte, for such was his name, permitted his brother to associate with him much more frequently than he would have done had he even guessed at his real character.

One day, about a month after the conversation which we have just detailed between the two brothers, the following conversation took place among that class of the mechanics whom we shall term the *profligates* :—

“ So he made a solemn promise, Harte, to *Dry-wig*”—this was a nickname they had for Frank—“ that he’d never smell liquor again.”

“ A most solemnious promise,” said Harte, ironically ; “ a most solemn an’ solemnious promise ; an’ only that I know he’s not a Methodist I could a’most mistake him for Paddy M’Mahon, the locality preacher, when he tould me”—

“ Paddy M’Mahon !” exclaimed Skinadre, the

first speaker, a little thin fellow, with white hair and red ferret eyes: "why, who the divil ever heard of a Methodist Preacher of the name of Paddy M'Mahon?"

"It's aisy known," observed a fellow named, or rather nicknamed, Jack Slanty, in consequence of a deformity in his leg, that gave him the appearance of leaning or slanting to the one side; "it's aisy known, Skinadre, that you're not long in this part of the country, or you'd not ax who Paddy M'Mahon is."

"Come, Slanty, never mind Paddy M'Mahon," said another of them; he received the gift of grace in the shape of a purty Methodist wife and a good fortune; ay, an' a sweet love-faist he had of it; he dropped the Padereens over Solomon's Bridge, and tuck to the evenin' meetins—that's enough for you to know; and now, Harte, about Maguire."

"Why," said Harte, "if I'm not allowed to edge in a word, I had betther cut."

"A most solemn promise, you say?"

"A most solemn and solemnious promise, that was what I said; never again, by night or day, wet or dry, high or low, in or out, up or down, here or there, to—to—get himself snifflicated wid any liquorary fluid whatsoever, be the same more or less, good, bad, or indifferent, hot or cold, thick or thin, black or white—"

"Have done, Harte, quit your cursed snifftherin', an' spake like a Christian. Do you think you can manage to circumsniffle him agin?"

"Ay," said Harte, "or any man that ever trod on neat's leather—barrin *one*."

"And who is that one?"

"That one, sir—that one—do you ax me who that one is?"

"Have you no ears? To be sure I do."

"Then, Skinadre, I'll tell you—I'll tell you, sarra"—we ought to add here, that Harte was a first-rate mimic, and was now *doing* a drunken man—"I'll tell you, sarra—that person was Nelson on the top of the monument in Sackville-street—no—no—I'm wrong—I could make poor ould Horace drunk any time, an' often did—an' many a tum-tumble he got off the monument at night, and the divil's own throuble I had in gettin' him up on it before mornin', bekaise you all know he'd be cashiered, or, any way, brought to court-marshal for leaving his po-po-post."

"Well, if Nelson's not the man, who is?"

"*Drywig's* his name," replied Harte; "you all know one *Drywig*, don't you?"

"Quit your cursed stuff, Harte," said a new speaker, named Garvey; "if you think you can dose him, say so, and if not, let us have no more talk about it."

"Faith an' it'll be a nice card to play," replied Harte, resuming his natural voice; but at all events, if you will all drop into Garvey's lodgings and mine, to-morrow evenin', you may find him there; but don't blame me if I fail."

"No one's goin' to blame you," said Slanty, "an' the devil's own pity it is, that that blasted Dry-

wig of a brother of his, keeps him in leadin'-strings the way he does."

"The way I'll do is this; I'll ask him up to look at the pattern of my new waistcoat, an' wanst I get him in, all I have to do is to lay it on thick."

"I doubt that," said another, who had joined them; "when he came here first, and for a long time afther, soapin' him might do; but I tell you his eye's open—it's no go—he's wide awake now."

"Shut your orifice," said Harte; "lave the thing to me: 'twas I did it before, although he doesn't think so, an' it's I that will do it again, although he doesn't think so. Haven't I been for the last mortal month guardin' him against yez, you villains?"

"To-morrow evenin'?"

"Ay, to-morrow evenin'; an' if we don't give him a *gauliogue* that'll make him dance the *circumbendibus* widout music—never believe that my name's any thing else than Tom Thin, that got thick upon spring wather. Hello! there's the bell, boys, so mind what I tould yez; we'll give him a farewell benefit if it was only for the sake of poor Drywig. Ah, poor Drywig! how will we live widout him? ochone, ochone! ha, ha, ha!"

Without at all suspecting the trap that had been set for him, Art attended his business as usual, till towards evening, when Harte took an opportunity, when he got him for a few minutes

by himself, of speaking to him apparently in a careless and indifferent way.

"Art, that's a nate patthern in your waistcoat ; but any how, I dunna how it is that *you* contrive to have every thing about you dacent an' jinteeler than another." This, by the way, was true both of him and his brother.

"Tut, it's but middlin'," said Art ; "it's now but a has-been :—when it was *at* itself it wasn't so bad."

"Begad, it was lovely wanst ; now, how do you account, Art, for bein' supairior to us all in— in every thing I may say ? ay, begad, in every thing, and in all things ; for that's a point every one allows."

"Nonsense, Syl, (his name was Sylvester,) don't be comin' it soft over me ; how am I betther than any other ?"

"Why, you're betther made, in the first place, than e'er a man among us ; in the next place, you're a betther workman,"—both these were true—"an', in the third place, you're the best lookin' of the whole pack ; an' now deny me these if you can :—eh, ha, ha, ha—my lad, I have you !"

An involuntary smile might be observed on Art's face at the last observation, which also was true.

"Syl," he replied, "behave yourself ; what are you at now ? I know you."

"Know me !" exclaimed Syl ; "why what do

you know of me? nothing that's bad I hope, any way."

"None of your palaver, at all events," replied Art; "have you got any tobaccy about you?"

"Sorra taste," replied Harte, "nor had since mornin'."

"Well, I have then," said Art, pulling out a piece, and throwing it to him with the air of a superior; "warm your gums wid that, for altho' I seldom take a blast myself, I don't forget them that do."

"Ah, begorra," said Harte, in an undertone that was designed to be heard, "there's something in the ould blood still; thank you, Art; faix it's yourself that hasn't your heart in a trifle, nor ever had. I bought a waistcoat on Saturday last from Paddy M'Gartland, but I only tuck it on the condition of your likin' it."

"Me! ha, ha, ha, well, sure enough, Syl, you're the quarest fellow alive. Why, man, is'nt it yourself you have to plaise, not me?"

"No matther for that; I'm not goin' to put my judgment in comparishment wid yours, at any rate; an' Paddy M'Gartland himself said, 'Syl, my boy, you know what you're about; if this patthern plaises Art Maguire, it'll plaise anybody. See what it is,' says he, 'to have the fine high ould blood in one's veins.' Begad he did. Will you come up this evenin' about seven o'clock, now, like a good fellow, an' pass your opinion for me? Divil a dacent stitch I have,

an' I want either it or another made up before the ball night.*

"Well, upon my soundhars, Syl, I did not think you were such a fool. Of coorse I'll pass my opinion on it. About seven o'clock you say?"

"About seven—thank you, Art. An' now listen;—sure the boys intend to play off some prank upon you afore you lave us."

"On me," replied the other, reddening; "very well, Syl, let them do so; I can bear a joke, or give a blow as well as another; so divil may care—such as they give, such as they'll get—only this, let there be no attempt made to make me drink whiskey, or else there may be harder hittin' than some o' them 'ud like; an' I think they ought to know that by this time."

"By jing! they surely ought. Well, but can you spell mam?"

"M-n-m."

"Ha, ha, ha! Take care of yourself, an don't forget seven."

"Never fear."

"Frank," said Art, "I am goin' up to Syl Harte's lodgin's to pass my opinion on the pattern of a waistcoat for him."

"Very well," said Frank, "of coorse."

"I'll not step long."

"As long or short as you like, Art, my boy."

* Country dances, or balls, in which the young men pay from ten to fifteen pence for whiskey "to trate the ladies." We hope they will be abolished.

"I hope, Frank, you don't imagine that there's any danger of drink?"

"Who, me? Why should I, after what past? Didn't you give me your word, and isn't your name Maguire? Not I."

Art had seen, and approved of the pattern, and was chatting with Syl, when a knock came to the room door in which they sat. Syl rose, and opening the door, immediately closed it after him, and began in a low voice to remonstrate with some persons outside. At length Art could hear the subject of debate pretty well—

"Sorra foot yez will put inside the room this evenin', above all evenins in the year."

"Why, sure we know he won't drink. I wish to goodness we knew he had been here; we wouldn't ax him to drink, bekase we know he wouldn't."

"No matther for that, sorrow foot yez'll put across the thrashel this evenin'. Now, I'll tell you what, Skinadre, I wouldn't this blessed minute, for all I've earned these six months, that ye came this evenin'—I have my raisins for it. Art Maguire is a boy that we have no right to compare ourselves wid—you all know that."

"We all know it, an' there's nobody denyin' it. We haven't the blood in our veins that he has; an' blood will show itself anywhere."

"Well, then, boys, for his sake—an' I know you'd do any day for his sake what you wouldn't, nor what you oughtn't, for mine—for his sake,

I say, go off wid yez, and bring your liquor somewhere else ; or, sure wait till to-morrow evenin'."

"Out of respect for Art Maguire we'll go ; an' divil another boy in the province we'd pay that respect to. Good evenin', Syl !"

"Aisy, boys," said Art, coming to the door, "don't let me frighten you—come in—I'd be very sorry to be the means of spoilin' sport, although I can't drink myself ; that wouldn't be generous—come in."

"Augh," said Skinadre, "by the livin' it's in him, an' I always knew it was—the rale drop."

"Boys," said Harte, "go off wid yez out o' this, I say ; divil a foot you'll come in."

"Arra go to—Jimmaiky ; who cares about you, Syl, when we have Art's liberty ? Sure we didn't know the thing ourselves half an hour ago."

"Come Syl, man alive," said Art, "let the poor fellows enjoy their liquor, an', as I can't join yez, I'll take my hat an' be off."

"I knew it, an' bad luck to yez, how yez 'ud drive him away," said Syl, quite angry.

"Faix, if we disturb *you*, Art, we're off—that 'ud be too bad. Yes, Syl, you *were* right—it was very thoughtless of us. Art, we ax your pardon ; sorra one of us meant you any offence in life. Come, boys."

Art's generosity was thus fairly challenged, and he was not to be outdone.

"Aisy, boys," said he; "sit down; I'll not go, if that'll please yez. Sure you'll neither eat me nor dhrink me."

"Well, there's jist one word you said, Slanty, that makes *me* submit to it," observed Harte, "an' that is, that it was *accident* your comin' at all." He here looked significantly at Art, as if to remind him of their previous conversation on that day, and as he did it, his face gradually assumed a complacent expression, as much as to say, it's now clear that *this* cannot be the trap they designed for you, otherwise it wouldn't be *accidental*. Art understood him, and returned a look which satisfied the other that he did so.

As they warmed in their liquor, or pretended to get warm, many sly attempts to entrap him were made, every one of which were openly and indignantly opposed by Harte, who would not suffer them to offer him a drop.

It is not our intention to dwell upon these matters: at present it is sufficient to say, that after a considerable part of the evening had been spent, Harte rose up, and called upon them all to fill their glasses—

"And," he added, "as this is a toast that ought always to bring a full glass *to* the mouth, and an empty one *from* it, I must take the liberty of axin Art himself to fill a bumper."

The latter looked at him with a good deal of real surprise, as the others did with that which was of a very different description.

"Skinadre," proceeded Harte, "will you hand over the cowl'd wather, for a bumper it must be, if it was vitriol." He then filled Art's glass with water, and proceeded—"Stand up, boys, and be proud, as you have a right to be; here's the health of Frank Maguire, and the ould blood of Ireland!—hip, hip, hurra!"

"Aisy, boys," said Art, whose heart was fired by this unexpected compliment, paid to a brother whom he loved so well, and who, indeed, so well deserved his love; "aisy, boys," he proceeded, "hand me the whiskey; if it was to be my last, I'll never drink my brother's health in cowl'd wather."

"Throth an' you will this time," said Harte, "undher this roof spirits won't crass your lips, an' you know for why."

"I know but one thing," replied Art, "that as you said yourself, if it was vitriol I'd drink it for the best brother that ever lived; I only promised him that I wouldn't get dhrunk, an' sure, drinkin' a glass o' whiskey, or three either, wouldn't make me dhrunk—so hand it here."

"Well, Art," said Harte, "there's one man you can't blame for this, and that is Syl Harte."

"No, Syl, never—but now, boys, I am ready."

"Frank Maguire's health! hip, hip, hurra!"

Thus was a fine, generous-minded, and affectionate young man—who possessed all the candour and absence of suspicion which characterize truth—tempted and triumphed over, partly through the very warmth of his own affections,

by a set of low, cunning profligates, who felt only anxious to drag him down from the moral superiority which they felt he possessed. That he was vain, and fond of praise, they knew, and our readers may also perceive that it was that unfortunate vanity which gave them the first advantage over him, by bringing him, through its influence, among them. Late that night he was carried home on a door, in a state of unconscious intoxication.

It is utterly beyond our power to describe the harrowing state of his sensations on awakening the next morning. Abasement, repentance, remorse, all combined as they were within him, fall far short of what he felt; he was degraded in his own eyes, deprived of self-respect, and stript of every claim to the confidence of his brother, as he was to the well known character for integrity which had been until then inseparable from the name. That, however, which pressed upon him with the most intense bitterness was the appalling reflection that he could no longer depend upon himself, nor put any trust in his own resolutions. Of what use was he in the world, without a will of his own, and the power of abiding by its decisions? None; yet what was to be done? He could not live out of the world, and wherever he went, its temptations would beset him. Then there was his beloved Margaret Murray! was he to make her the wife of a common drunkard? or did she suspect, when she pledged herself to him, that she was giving away her

heart and affections to a poor unmanly sot, who had not sense or firmness to keep himself sober ? He felt in a state between distraction and despair, and putting his hands over his face, he wept bitterly. To complete the picture, his veins still throbbed with the dry fever that follows intoxication ; his stomach was in a state of deadly sickness and loathing, and his head felt exactly as if it would burst or fly asunder.

Alas, had his natural character been properly understood and judiciously managed—had he been early taught to understand and to control his own obvious errors—had the necessity of self-reliance, firmness, and independence been taught him—had his principles not been enfeebled by the foolish praise of his family, nor his vanity inflated by their senseless appeals to it—it is possible, nay, almost certain, that he would, even at this stage of his life, have been completely free from the failings which are beginning even now to undermine the whole strength of his moral constitution.

Frank's interview with him on this occasion was short but significant—

" Art," said he, " you know I was never a man of many words ; and I'm not goin' to turn over a new lafe now. To scould you is not my intention—nor to listen to your promises. All I have to say is, that *you have broken your word and disgraced your name*. As for me, I can put neither confidence nor trust in you any longer ; neither will I."

A single tear was visible on his cheek as he passed out of the room ; and when he did, Art's violent sobs were quite audible. Indeed, if truth must be told, Frank's distress was nearly equal to his brother's. What, however, was to be done ? He was too ill to attend his business—a circumstance which only heightened his distress ; for he knew that difficult as was the task of encountering his master, and those who would only enjoy his remorse, still even that was less difficult to be borne than the scourge of his own reflections. At length a thought occurred, which appeared to give him some relief ; that thought he felt was all that now remained to him, for as it was clear that he could no longer depend on himself, it was necessary that he should find something else on which to depend. He accordingly sent an intimation to his master that he wished to have a few minutes conversation with him, if he could spare time ; M'Carroll accordingly came, and found him in a state which excited the worthy man's compassion.

“ Well, Art,” said he, “ what is it you wish to speak to me about ? I hear you were drunk last night. Now I thought you had more sense than to let these fellows put you into such a pickle. I have a fine, well-conducted set of men in general ; but there is among them a hardened, hackneyed crew, who, because they are good workmen, don't care a curse about either you or me, or any body else. They're always sure of employment, if

not here, at least elsewhere, or, indeed, anywhere."

"But it wasn't their fault," replied Art, "it was altogether my own; they were opposed to my drinkin' at all, especially as they knew that I promised Frank never to get drunk again. It was when Syl Harte proposed Frank's health, that I drank the whiskey in spite o' them."

"Syl Harte," said his master with a smile, "ay, I was thinkin' so; well, no matter, Art, have strength and resolution not to do the like again."

"But that's the curse, Sir," replied the young man, "I have neither the one nor the other, and it's on that account I sent for you."

"How is that, Art?"

"Why," said the other, "I am goin' to bind myself—I am goin' to swear against it, and so to make short work of it, and for fraid any one might prevent me"—he blessed himself, and proceeded—"I now, in the presence of God, swear upon this blessed Manwil* that a drop of spirituous drink, or liquor of any kind, won't cross my lips for the next seven years, barrin' it may be necessary as medicine;" he then kissed the book three times, blessed himself again, and sat down considerably relieved.

"Now," he added, "you may tell them what I've done; that's seven years freedom, thank

* Manual.

God ; for I wouldn't be the slave of whiskey—the greatest of tyrants—for the wealth of Europe.”

“ No, but the worst of it is, Art,” replied his master, who was an exceedingly shrewd man, “ that whiskey makes a man his own tyrant and his own slave, both at the same time, and that's more than the greatest tyrant that ever lived did yet. As for yourself, you're not fit to work any this day, so I think you ought to take a stretch across the country, and walk off the consequence of your debauch with these fellows last night.”

Art now felt confidence and relief ; he had obtained the very precise aid of which he stood in need. The danger was now over, and a prop placed under his own feeble resolution, on which he could depend with safety ; here there could be no tampering with temptation ; the matter was clear, explicit, and decisive : so far all was right, and, as we have said, his conscience felt relieved of a weighty burthen.

His brother on hearing it from his own lips, said little, yet that little was not to discourage him ; he rather approved than otherwise, but avoided expressing any *very* decided opinion on it, one way or the other.

“ It's a pity,” said he, “ that want of common resolution should drive a man to take an oath ; if you had tried your own strength a little farther, Art, who knows but you might a' gained a victory without it, and that would be more creditable and manly than swearin' ; still, the temptation to drink

is great to some people, and this prevents all possibility of fallin' into it."

Art, who never having dealt in anything disingenuous himself, was slow to credit duplicity in others, did not once suspect that the *profligates* had played him off this trick, rather to annoy the brother than himself. It was, after all, nothing but the discreditable triumph of cunning and debased minds over the inexperience, or vanity, if you will, of one who, whatever his foibles might be, would himself scorn to take an ungenerous advantage of confidence reposed in him, in consequence of his good opinion and friendly feeling.

The period of their apprenticeship, however, elapsed, and the day at length arrived for their departure from the Corner House. Their master, and, we may add, their friend, solicited them to stop with him still as journeymen, but, as each had a different object in view, they declined it. Art proposed to set up for himself, for it was indeed but natural that one whose affections had been now so long engaged, should wish, with as little delay as possible, to see himself possessed of a home to which he might bring his betrothed wife. Frank had not trusted to chance, or relied merely upon vain projects, like his brother ; for some time previous to the close of his apprenticeship, he had been quietly negotiating the formation of a partnership with a carpenter who wanted a steady man at the helm. The man had capital himself, and was clever enough in his

way, but then he was illiterate, and utterly without method in conducting his affairs. Frank was therefore the identical description of person he stood in need of, and as the integrity of his family was well known—that integrity which they felt so anxious to preserve without a speck—there was, of course, little obstruction in the way of their coming to terms.

On the morning of the day on which they left his establishment, M'Carroll came into the workshop while they were about bidding farewell to their companions, with whom they had lived, abating the three or four pranks that were played off upon Art, on good and friendly terms, and, seeing that they were about to take their departure, he addressed them as follows :—

“ I need not say,” he proceeded, “ that I regret you are leaving me, which I do ; for, without meaning any disrespect to those present, I am bound to acknowledge that two better workmen, or two honester young men, were never in my employment. Art, indeed, is unsurpassed, considering his time, and that he is only closing his apprenticeship ; 'tis true he has had good opportunities—opportunities which, I am happy to say, he has never neglected. I am 'in the habit, as you both know, of addressing a few words of advice to my young men at the close of their apprenticeships, and when they are entering upon the world as you are now. I will therefore lay down a few simple rules for your guidance ; and,

perhaps, by following them, you will find yourselves neither the worse nor the poorer men.

“ Let the first principle then of your life, both as mechanics and men, be truth—truth in all you think, in all you say, and in all you do ; if this should fail to procure you the approbation of the world, it will not fail to procure you your own, and what is better, that of God. Let your next principle be industry—honest, fair, legitimate industry, to which you ought to annex punctuality—for industry, without punctuality, is but half a virtue. Let your third great principle be sobriety—strict and undeviating sobriety. A mechanic without sobriety, so far from being a benefit or an ornament to society, as he ought to be, is a curse and a disgrace to it. Within the limits of sobriety all the rational enjoyments of life are comprised ; and without them, are to be found all those which desolate society with crime, indigence, sickness, and death. In maintaining sobriety in the world, and especially among persons of your own class, you will certainly have much to contend with ; remember that firmness of character, when acting upon right feeling and good sense, will enable you to maintain and work out every virtuous and laudable purpose which you propose to effect. Do not, therefore, suffer yourselves to be shamed from sobriety, or, indeed, from any other moral duty, by the force of ridicule ; neither on the other hand, must you be seduced into it by flattery, or the transient gratification of so-

cial enjoyment. I have, in fact, little further to add. You are now about to become members of society, and to assume more distinctly the duties which it imposes on you. Discharge them all faithfully—do not break your words, but keep your promises, and respect yourselves. Remember that self-respect is a very different thing from pride, or an empty overweening vanity—self-respect is, in fact, altogether incompatible with them, as they are with it ; like opposite qualities, they cannot abide in the same individual. Let me impress it on you, that those are the principles by which you must honourably succeed in life, if you *do* succeed ; whilst by neglecting them, you must assuredly fail. 'Tis true, knavery and dishonesty are often successful, but it is by the exercise of fraudulent practices, which I am certain you will never think of carrying into the business of life—I consequently dismiss this point altogether, as unsuitable to either of you. I have only to add now, that I hope most sincerely you will observe the few simple truths I have laid down to you, and I trust that ere many years pass, I may live to see you both respectable, useful, and independent members of society. Farewell, and may you be all we wish you !”

Whether this little code of useful doctrine was equally observed by both, will appear in the course of our narrative.

About a month or so before the departure of Frank and Art from the Corner House, Jimmy

Murray and another man were one day in the beginning of May, strolling through one of his pasture fields. His companion was a thin, hard-visaged little fellow, with a triangular face, and dry bristly hair, very much the colour of, and nearly as prickly as a withered furze-bush ; both, indeed, were congenial spirits ; for it is only necessary to say, that he of the furze-bush was another of those charitable and generous individuals whose great delight consisted, like his friend Murray, in watching the seasons, and speculating upon the failure of the crops. He had the reputation of being wealthy, and in fact was so ; indeed, of the two, those who had reason to know, considered that he held the weightier purse ; his name was Cooney Finigan, and the object of his visit to Murray—their conversation, however, will sufficiently develope that. Both, we should observe, appeared to be exceedingly blank and solemn ; Cooney's hard face, as he cast his eye about him, would have made one imagine that he had just buried the last of his family, and Murray looked as if he had a son about to be hanged. The whole cause of this was simply that a finer season, nor one giving ampler promise of abundance, had not come within the memory of man.

“ Ah !” said Murray with a sigh, “ look, Cooney, at the distressin' growth of grass that's there—a foot high if it's an inch ! If God hasn't sed it, there will be the largest and heaviest crops that ever was seen in the country ; heigho !”

“ Well, but one can’t have good luck always,” replied Cooney; “ only it’s the wondherful forwardness of the whate that’s distressin’ *me*.”

“ An’ do you think that I’m sufferin’ nothin’ on that account ?” asked his companion : “ only *you* haven’t three big stacks of hay waitin’ for a failure, as *I* have.”

“ That’s bekase I have no meadow on my farm,” replied Cooney; “ otherwise I’d be in the hay-trade as well as yourself.”

“ Well, God help us, Cooney ! every one has their misfortunes as well as you and I ; sure enough, it’s a bitter business to see how every thing’s thrivin’—hay, oats, and whate ! why they’ll be for a song ; may I never get a bad shillin’, but the poor ’ill be paid for takin’ them ! that’s the bitther pass things will come to ; *mavrone oh* !—but it’s a black look out !”

“ An’ this rain, too,” said Cooney, “ so soft, and even, and small, and warm, that it’s playin’ the very devil. Nothin’ could stand it. Why it ud make a rotten twig grow if it was put into the ground.”

“ Divil a one o’ me would like to make the thrial,” said Murray, “ for fraid I might have the misfortune to succeed. Death alive ! Only think of my four arks of meal, an’ my three stacks of hay, an’ divil a pile to come out of them for another twelve months !”

“ It’s bad, too bad, I allow,” said the other ; still let us not despair, man alive ; who knows but

the season may change for the worse yet. Whisht!" he exclaimed, slapping the side of his thigh, "hould up your head, Jemmy, I have thought of it; I have thought of it."

"You have thought of what, Cooney?"

"Why, death alive, man, sure's there's plenty of time, God be praised for it, for the—murder, why didn't we think of it before? ha, ha, ha!"

"For the what, man? don't keep us longin' for it."

"Why for the pratie crops to fail still; sure it's only the beginning o' May now, and who knows but we might have the happiness to see a right good general failure of the praties still? Eh? ha, ha, ha!"

"Upon my sounds, Cooney, you have taken a good deal of weight off of me. Faith we have the look-out of a bad potato crop yet, sure enough. How is the wind? Don't you think you feel a little dry bitin' in it, as if it came from the aist?"

"Why, then, in regard of the dead calm that's in it, I can't exactly say—but, let me see—you're right, divil a doubt of it; faith it is, sure enough; bravo, Jemmy, who knows but all may go wrong wid the crops yet."

"At all events, let us have a glass on the head of it, and we'll drink to the failure of the potato crops, and God prosper the aist wind, for it's the best for you an' me, Cooney, that's goin'. Come up to the house above, and we'll have a glass on the head of it."

The fastidious reader may doubt whether any two men, no matter how griping or rapacious, could prevail upon themselves to express to each other sentiments so openly inimical to all human sympathy. In holding this dialogue, however, the men were only thinking aloud, and giving utterance to the wishes which every inhuman knave of their kind feels. In compliance, however, with the objections which may be brought against the probability of the above dialogue, we will now give the one which did actually occur, and then appeal to our readers whether the first is not much more in keeping with the character of the speakers—which ought always to be a writer's great object—than the second. Now, the reader already knows that each of these men had three or four large arks of meal laid past until the arrival of a failure in the crops and a season of famine, and that Murray had three large stacks of hay in the hope of a similar failure in the meadow crop.

“Good morrow, Jemmy.”

“Good morrow kindly, Cooney; isn't this a fine saison, the Lord be praised!”

“A glorious saison, blessed be His name! I don't think ever I remimber a finer promise of the crops.”

“Throth, nor I, the meadows is a miracle to look at.”

“Divil a thing else—but the whate, an' oats, an' early potatoes, beat anything ever was seen.”

" Throth, the poor will have them for a song, Jemmy."

" Ay, or for less, Cooney ; they'll be paid for takin' them."

" It's enough to raise one's heart, Jemmy, just to think of it."

" Why then it is that, an', for the same raison, come up to the house above, and we'll have a sup on the head of it ; sure, it's no harm to drink success to the crops, and may God prevent a failure, any how."

" Divil a bit."

Now, we simply ask the reader which dialogue is in the more appropriate keeping with the characters of honest candid Jemmy and Cooney ?

" And now," proceeded Cooney, " regardin' this match between your youngest daughter, Margaret, and my son Toal."

" Why, as for myself," replied Murray, " sorra much of objection I have aginst it, barrin' his figure ; if he was about a foot and a half higher, and a little betther made—God pardon me, an' blessed be the maker—there would, at all events, be less difficulty in the business, especially with Peggy herself."

" But couldn't *you* bring her about ?"

" I did my endayvours, Cooney ; you may take my word I did."

" Well, an' is she not softenin' at all ?"

" Upon my sounds, Cooney, I cannot say she is If I could only get her to spake one sairious

word on the subject, I might have some chance ; but I cannot, Cooney ; I think both you an' little Toal had better give it up. I doubt there's no chance."

"Faith an' the more will be her loss. I tell you, Jemmy, that he'd outdo either you or me as a meal man. What more would you want?"

"He's cute enough, I know that."

"I tell you you don't know the half of it. It's the man that can make the money for her that you want."

"But aginst that, you know, it's Peggy an' not me, that's to marry him. Now, you know that women often—though not always, I grant—wish to have something in the appearance of their husband that they needn't be ashamed to look at."

"That's the only objection that can be brought against him. He's the boy can make the money ; I'm a fool to him. I'll tell you what, Jemmy Murray, may I never go home, but he'd skin a flint. Did you hear any thing ? Now !"

Murray, who appeared to be getting somewhat tired of this topic, replied rather hastily—

"Why, Cooney Finnigan, if he could skin the devil himself and ait him afterwards, she wouldn't have him. She has refused some of the best looking young men in the parish, without either rhyme or raison, an' I'm sure she is not goin' to take your *leprechaun* of a son, that you might run a five gallon keg between his knees. Sure, bad luck to the thing his legs resemble but a pair of

raipin' hooks, and their backs outwards. Let us pass this subject, and come in till we drink a glass together."

"And so you call my son *leprechaun*, and he has legs like raipin' hooks!"

Ha, ha, ha! Come in, man alive; never mind little Toak."

"Like raipin' hooks! I'll tell you what, Jemmy, I say now in sincerity, that there is every prospect of a plentiful sayson; and that there may, I pray God this day; meadows an' all—O above all, the meadows, for *I'm* not in the hay business myself."

"So," said Murray, laughing, "you would cut off your nose to vex your face."

"I would any day, even if I should suffer myself by it; and now good bye, Jemmy Murray, to the *dional* I pitch the whole thing! Raipin' hooks!"

And as he spoke, off went the furious little extortioner, irretrievably offended.

The subject of Margaret's marriage, however, was, at that precise period, one on which her father and friends had felt and expressed much concern. Many proposals had been made for her hand during Art's apprenticeship; but each and all not only without success, but without either hope or encouragement. Her family were surprised and grieved at this, and the more so, because they could not divine the cause of it. Upon the subject of her attachment to Maguire, she not

only preserved an inviolable silence herself, but exacted a solemn promise from her lover that he should not disclose it to any human being. Her motives, she said, for keeping their affection and engagement to each other secret, was to avoid being harassed at home by her friends and family, who, being once aware of the relation in which she stood towards Art, would naturally give her little peace. She knew very well that her relations would not consent to such a union, and, in point of mere prudence and forethought, her conduct was right, for she certainly avoided much intemperate remonstrance, as afterwards proved to be the case when she mentioned it. Her father on this occasion having amused them at home by relating the tiff which had taken place between Cooney Finigan and himself, which was received with abundant mirth by them all, especially by Margaret, seriously introduced the subject of her marriage, and of a recent proposal which had been made.

“You are the only unmarried girl we have left now,” he said, “and surely you ought neither to be too proud or too sauey to refuse such a match as Mark Hanratty—a young man in as thrivin’ a business as there is in all Ballykeerin; hasn’t he a good shop, good business, and a good back of friends in the country that will stand to him, an’ only see how he has thruv these last couple o’ years. What’s come over you at all? or do you ever intend to marry? you have refused every

one for so far widout either rhyme or raison. Why, Peggy, what father's timper could stand this work?"

"Ha, ha ha! like raipin' hooks, father—an' so the little red rogue couldn't bear that? well, at all events, the comparison's a good one—sorra better, ha, ha, ha—raipin' hooks!"

"Is that the answer you have for me?"

"Answer!" said Margaret, feigning surprise, "what about?"

"About Mark Hanratty."

"Well, but sure if he is fond of me, he'll have no objection to wait."

"Ay, but if he does wait, will you have him?"

"I didn't promise that, and, at any rate, I'd not like to be a shopkeeper's wife."

"Why not?"

"Why, he'd be puttin' me behind the counter, and you know I'd be too handsome for that; sure, there's Thogue Nugent that got the handsome wife from Dublin, and of a fair, or market day, for one that goes in to buy anything, there goes ten in to look at her. Throth, I think he ought to put her in the windy at once, just to save trouble, and give the people room."

"Ha, ha, ha! well, you're the dickens of a girl, sure enough; but come, *avourneen*, don't be makin' me laugh now, but tell me what answer I'm to give Mark."

"Tell him to go to Dublin, like Thogue; he lives in the upper part of the town, and Thogue

in the lower, and then there will be a beauty in each end of it."

"Suppose I take it into my head to lose my temper, Peggy, maybe I'd make you spake then?"

Well, will you give me a peck o' mail for widow Dolan?"

"No, divil a dust."

"Sure I'll pay you—ha, ha, ha!"

"Sure you'll pay me! *mavrone*, but it's often you've said that afore, and divil a cross o' your coin ever we seen yet; faith, it's you that's heavily in my debt, when I think of all ever you promised to pay me."

"Very well, then; no meal, no answer."

"And will you give me an answer if I give you the meal?"

"Honour bright, didn't I say it."

"Go an' get it yourself then, an' see now, don't do as you always do, take double what you're allowed."

Margaret, in direct violation of his paternal injunction, did most unquestionably take near twice the stipulated quantity for the widow, and, in order that there might be no countermand on the part of her father, as sometimes happened, she sent it off with one of the servants by a back way, so that he had no opportunity of seeing how far her charity had carried her beyond the spirit and letter of her instructions.

"Well," said he, when she returned, "now

for the answer—and before you give it, think of the comfort you'll have with him—how fine and nicely furnished his house is—he has carpets upon the rooms, ay, an' upon my sounds, on the very stairs itself! faix its you that will be in state. Now, *acushla*, let us hear your answer."

"It's very short, father; *I won't have him.*"

"Won't have him! and in the name of all that's unbiddable and undutiful, who will you have, if one may ax that, or do you intend to have any one at all, or not?"

"Let me see," she said, putting the side of her fore finger to her lips, "what day is this?—Thursday. Well, then, on this day month, father, I'll tell my mother who I'll have, or, at any rate, who I'd wish to have; but, in the mean time, nobody need ask me anything further about it till then, for I won't give any other information on the subject."

The father looked very seriously into the fire for a considerable time, and was silent; he then drew his breath lengthily, tapped the table a little with his fingers, and exclaimed—

"A month! well, the time will pass, and, as we must wait, why we must, that's all."

Matters lay in this state until the third day before the expiration of the appointed time, when Margaret, having received from Art secret intelligence of his return, hastened to a spot agreed upon between them, that they might consult each other upon what ought to be done under circumstances so critical.

After the usual preface to such tender discussions, Art listened with a good deal of anxiety, but without the slightest doubt of her firmness and attachment, to an account of the promise she had given her father.

"Well but, Margaret darlin'," said he, "what will happen if they refuse?"

"Surely you know it is too late for them to refuse *now*; arn't we as good as married—didn't we pass the Hand Promise—isn't our troth plighted?"

"I know that, but suppose they should still refuse, then what's to be done? what are you and I to do?"

"I must lave that to you, Art," she replied archly.

"And it couldn't be in better hands, Margaret; if they refuse their consent, there's nothing for it but a regular *runaway*, and that will settle it."

"You must think I'm very fond of you," she added playfully, "and I suppose you do, too."

"Margaret," said Art, and his face became instantly overshadowed with seriousness and care, "the day may come when I'll feel how necessary you will be to guide and support me."

She looked quickly into his eyes, and saw that his mind appeared disturbed and gloomy.

"My dear Art," she asked, "what is the meaning of your words, and why is there such sadness in your face?"

"There ought not to be sadness in it," he said, "when I'm sure of you—you will be my guardian angel maybe yet."

"Art, have you any particular meanin' in what you say?"

"I'll tell you all," said he, "when we are married."

Margaret was generous-minded, and, as the reader may yet acknowledge, heroic; there was all the boldness and bravery of innocence about her, and she could scarcely help attributing Art's last words to some fact connected with his feelings, or, perhaps, to circumstances which his generosity prevented him from disclosing. A thought struck her—

"Art," said she, "the sooner this is settled the better; as it is, if you'll be guided by me, we won't let the sun set upon it; walk up with me to my father's house, come in, and in the name of God we'll leave nothing unknown to him. He is a hard man, but he has a heart, and he is better a thousand times than he is reported. I know it."

"Come," said Art, "let us go; he may be richer, but there's the blood, and the honesty, and good name of the Maguires against his wealth——"

A gentle pressure on his arm, when he mentioned the word *wealth*, and he was silent.

"My darlin' Margaret," said he, "oh how unworthy I am of you!"

"Now," said she, "lave me to manage this business my own way. Your good sense will tell you when to spake; but whatever my father says, trate him with respect—lave the rest to me."

On entering, they found Murtagh and his wife in the little parlour—the former smoking his pipe, and the latter darning a pair of stockings.

"Father," said Margaret, "Art Maguire conveyed me home; but, indeed, I must say, I was forced to ask him."

"Art Maguire! Why, then, upon my sounds, Art, I'm glad to see you. An' how are you, man alive? an' how is Frank? eh? As grave as a jidge, as he always was—ha, ha, ha! Take a chair, Art, and be sittin'. Peggy *gluntha me*, remimber you must have Art at your weddin'. It's now widin three days of the time I'm to know who he is; and upon my sounds, I'm like a hen on a hot griddle till I hear it."

"You're not within three days, father."

"But I say I am, accordin' to your own countin'.

"You're not within three hours, father;"—her face glowed, and her whole system became vivified with singular and startling energy as she spoke;—"no, you are not within three hours, father; not within three minutes, my dear father; for there stands the man," she said, pointing to Art. She gave three or four loud hysterical sobs, and then stood calm, looking not upon her father, but upon her lover; as much as to say, is this love, or is it not?

Her mother, who was a quiet, inoffensive creature, without any principle or opinion whatsoever at variance with those of her husband, rose upon hearing this announcement; but so ambiguous were her motions, that we question whether the most sagacious prophet of all antiquity could anticipate from them the slightest possible clue to her opinion. The husband, in fact, had not yet spoken, and until he had, the poor woman did not know her own mind. Under any circumstances, it was difficult exactly to comprehend her meaning. In fact, she could not speak three words of common English, having probably never made the experiment a dozen times in her life. Murray was struck for some time mute.

"And is this the young man," said he at length, "that has been the mains of preventin' you from being so well married often and often before now?"

"No, indeed, father," she replied, "he was not the occasion of that; but I was. I am betrothed to him, as he is to me, for five years."

"And," said her father, "my consent to that marriage you will never have; if you marry him, marry him; but you will marry him without my blessin'."

"Jemmy Murray," said Art, whose pride of family was fast rising, "who am I, and who are you?"

Margaret put her hand to his mouth, and said in a low voice—

"Art, if you love me, leave it to my management."

"Ho, Jemmy," said the mother, addressing her husband; "only put your ears to this! *Ho, dher manim*, this is that skamin' piece of *feasthou-lagh** they call *grah*.† Ho, by my sowl, it shows what moseys they is to think that—what's this you call it—low—lov—loaf, or whatsomever the devil it is, has to do wid makin' a young couple man and wife. Didn't I hate the ground you stud on when I was married upon you; but I had the *airighid*. Ho, faix, I had the shiners."

"Divil a word o' lie in that, Madjey, asthore. You had the money, an' I got it, and wern't we as happy, or ten times happier than if we had married for love?"

"To be sartin we am; and isn't we more unhappier now, nor if we had got married for loaf, glory be to godness!"

"Father," said Margaret, anxious to put an end to this ludicrous debate, "this is the only man I will ever marry."

"And by Him that made me," said her father, "you will never have my consent to that marriage, nor my blessin'."

"Art," said she, "not one word. Here, in the presence of my father and mother, and in the presence of God himself, I say I will be your wife, and only yours."

"And," said her father, "see whether a blessin' will attend a marriage where a child goes against the will of her parents"

* Nonsense.

† Love.

"I'm of age now to think and act for myself, father; an' you know this is the first thing I ever disobeyed you in, an' I hope it 'ill be the last. Am I goin' to marry one that's discreditable to have connected with our family? So far from that, it is the credit that is comin' to us. Is a respectable young man, without spot or stain on his name, with the good will of all that know him, and a good trade—is such a person, father, so *very* high above us? Is one who has the blood of the great Fermanagh Maguires in his veins not good enough for your daughter, because you happen to have a few bits of metal that he has not? Father, you *will* give us your consent an' your blessin' too; but remember that whether you do, or whether you don't, I'll not break my vow; I'll marry him."

"Margaret," said the father, in a calm collected voice, "put both consent and blessin' out of the question; you will never have either from me."

"*Ho dher a lhora heena,*" exclaimed the mother. "I'm the boy for one that will see the buckle crassed against them, or I'd die every day this twelve months upon the top and tail o' Knockmany, through wind an' weather. You darlin' scoundrel," she proceeded, addressing Art, in what she intended to be violent abuse—"God condemn your sowl to happiness, is I or am my husband to be ~~while~~ *be*lewin' on your loaf? Eh,

answer us that, if you're not able, like a man, as you is?"

Margaret, whose humour, and sense of the ludicrous were exceedingly strong, having seldom heard her mother so excited before, gave an arch look at Art, who, on the contrary, felt perfectly confounded at the woman's language, and in that look there was a kind of humorous entreaty that he would depart. She nodded towards the door, and Art, having shook hands with her, said—

"Good by Jemmy Murray, I hope you'll change your mind still; your daughter never could get any one that loves her as I do, or that could treat her with more tenderness and affection."

"Be off, you darlin' vagabone," said Mrs. Murray, "the heavens be your bed, you villain, why don't you stay where you is, an' not be malivogin an undacent family this way."

"Art Maguire," replied Murray, "you heard my intention, and I'll *never* change it." Art then withdrew.

Our readers may now anticipate the consequences of the preceding conversation. Murray and his wife having persisted in their refusal to sanction Margaret's marriage with Maguire, every argument and influence having been resorted to in vain, Margaret and he made what is termed a runaway match of it, that is, a rustic elopement, in which the young couple go usually to the house of some friend, under the protection of whose wife

the female remains until her marriage, when the husband brings her home.

And now they commence life. No sooner were they united, than Art, feeling what was due to her who had made such and so many sacrifices for him, put his shoulder to the wheel with energy and vigour. Such aid as his father could give him, he did give; that which stood him most instead, however, was the high character and unsullied reputation of his own family. Margaret's conduct, which was looked upon as a proof of great spirit and independence, rendered her if possible still better loved by the people than before. But, as we said, there was every confidence placed in Art, and the strongest hopes of his future success and prosperity in life expressed by all who knew him; and this was reasonable. Here was a young man of excellent conduct, a first-rate workman, steady, industrious, quiet, and, above all things, sober; for the three or four infractions of sobriety that took place during his apprenticeship, had they even been generally known, would have been reputed as nothing; the truth is, that both he and Margaret commenced life, if not with a heavy purse, at least with each a light heart. He immediately took a house in Ballykeerin, and, as it happened that a man of his own trade, named Davis, died about the same time of lockjaw, occasioned by a chisel wound in the ball of the thumb, as a natural consequence, Art came in for a considerable portion of his

business ; so true is it, that one man's misfortune is another man's making. His father did all he could for him, and Margaret's sisters also gave them some assistance, so that, ere the expiration of a year, they found themselves better off than they had reason to expect, and, what crowned their happiness—for they were happy—was the appearance of a lovely boy, whom, after his father, they called Arthur. Their hearts had not much now to crave after, happiness was theirs, and health ; and, to make the picture still more complete, prosperity, as the legitimate reward of Art's industry and close attention to business, was beginning to dawn upon them.

One morning, a few months after this time, as she sat with their lovely babe in her arms, the little rogue playing with the tangles of her raven hair, Art addressed her in the fulness of as affectionate a heart as ever beat in a human bosom :—

“ Well, Mag,” said he, “ are you sorry for not marryin’ Mark Hanratty ? ”

She looked at him, and then at their beautiful babe, which was his image, and her lip quivered for a moment ; she then smiled, and kissing the infant, left a tear upon its face.

He started, “ My God, Margaret,” said he, “ what is this ? ”

“ If that happy tear,” she replied, “ is a proof of it, I am.”

Art stooped, and, kissing her tenderly, said—

"May God make me, and keep me worthy of you, my darling wife!"

"Still, Art," she continued, "there is one slight drawback upon my happiness, and that is, when it comes into my mind that, in marryin' you, I didn't get a parent's blessin'. It sometimes makes my mind sad; and I can't help feelin' so."

"I could wish you had got it myself," replied her husband; "but you know it can't be remedied now."

"At all events," she said, "let us live so as that we may deserve it. It was my first and last offence towards my father and mother."

"And it's very few could say as much, Mag, dear; but don't think of it. Sure, may be, he may come about yet."

"I can hardly hope that," she replied, "after the priest failin'."

"Well, but," replied her husband, taking up the child in his arms, "who knows what this little man may do for us? Who knows, some day, but we'll send a little messenger to his grandfather for a blessin' for his mammy that he won't have the heart to refuse."

This opened a gleam of satisfaction in her mind. She and her husband having once more kissed the little fellow, exchanged glances of affection, and he withdrew to his workshop.

Every week and month henceforth added to their comfort. Art advanced in life, in respect-

ability, and independence; he was, indeed, a pattern to all tradesmen who wish to maintain in the world such a character as enforces esteem and praise. His industry was incessant; he was ever engaged in something calculated to advance himself; up early and down late, was his constant practice—no man could exceed him in punctuality—his word was sacred—whatever he said was done; and so general were his habits of industry, integrity, and extreme good conduct appreciated, that he was mentioned as a fresh instance of the high character sustained by all who had the old blood of the Fermanagh Maguires in their veins. In this way he proceeded, happy in the affections of his admirable wife—happy in two lovely children—happy in his circumstances—in short, every way happy, when, to still add to that happiness, on the night of the very day that closed the term of his oath against liquor—that closed the seventh year—his wife presented him with their third child, and second daughter.

In Ireland there is generally a very festive spirit prevalent during christenings, weddings, or other social meetings of a similar nature; and so strongly is this spirit felt, that it is—or was, I should rather say—not at all an unusual thing for a man, when taking an oath against liquor, to except christenings or weddings, and very frequently funerals, as well as Christmas and Easter. Every one acquainted with the country

knows this ; and no one need be surprised at the delight with which Art Maguire hailed this agreeable coincidence. Art, we have said before, was naturally social, and, although he did most religiously observe his oath, yet, since the truth must be told, we are bound to admit that, on many and many an occasion he did also most unquestionably regret the restraint that he had placed upon himself with regard to liquor. Whenever his friends were met together, whether at fair or market, wedding, christening, or during the usual festivals, it is certain that a glass of punch or whiskey never crossed his nose that he did not feel a secret hankering after it, and would often have snuffed in the odour, or licked his lips at it, were it not that he would have considered the act as a kind of misprision of perjury. Now, however, that he was free, and about to have a christening in his house, it was at least only reasonable that he should indulge in a glass, if only for the sake of drinking the health of "the young lady." His brother Frank happened to be in town that evening, and Art prevailed on him to stop for the night.

"You must stand for the young *colleen*, Frank," said he ; "and who do you think is to join you ?"

"Why, how could I guess ?" replied Frank.

"The sorra other but little Toal Finigan, that thought to take Margaret from me ;—you remember.

"I *remember* he wanted to marry her ; and I know that he's the most revengeful and ill-minded little scoundrel on the face of the earth. If ever there was a devil in a human bein', there's one in that mis-shapen but sugary little vagabone. His father was bad enough when he was alive, and worse than he ought to be, may God forgive him now ; but this spiteful skin-flint, that's a curse to the poor of the country, as he is their hatred, what could tempt you to ax him to stand for any child of yours ?"

"He may be what he likes, Frank ; but all I can say is, that I found him civil and obligin' ; an' you know the devil's not so black as he's painted."

"I know no such thing, Art," replied the other ; "for that matter, he may be a great deal blacker ; but still I'd advise you to have nothing to say to Toal—he's a bad graft, egg and bird. But what civility did he ever show you?"

"Why, he's a devilish pleasant little fellow, any way, so he is. Throth it's he that spakes well of you, at any rate. If he was ten times worse than he is, he has a tongue in his head that will gain him friends."

"I see, Art," said Frank, laughing, "he has been layin' it thick an' sweet on you. My hand to you, there's not so sweet-tongued a knave in the province ; but mind, I put you on your guard—he's never pure honey all out, unless where there's bitther hatred and revenge at the bottom

of it—that's well known; so be advised, and keep him at a distance; have nothin' to do or to say to him, and, as to havin' him for a godfather, why I hardly think the child could thrive that he'd stand for."

"It's too late for that now," replied Art, "for I axed him bettther than three weeks ago."

"An' did he consint?"

"He did, to be sure."

"Well, then, keep your word to him, ef coorse; but, as soon as the christenin's over, drop him like a hot potato."

"Why thin, that's hard enough, Frank, so long as I find the crathur civil."

"Ay, but, Art, don't I tell you that it's his civility you should be afeard of; throth, the same civility ought to get him kicked a dozen times a day."

"Faix, and," said Art, "kicked or not, here he comes. Whisht! don't be oncivil to the little bachelor, at any rate."

"Oncivil! why should I? The little extortionin' vagabone never injured or fleeced me; but, before he puts his nose into the house, let me tell you wanst more, Art, that he never gets sweet upon any one that he hasn't in hatred for them at the bottom; that's his carracter."

"I know it is," said Art; "but until I find it to be true, I'll take the gineros side, an' won't believe it. He's a screw, I know, an' a skin-flint, an'—whisht! here he is."

"Toal Finigan, how are you?" said Art. "I was goin' to say how is every tether length of you, only that I think it would be impossible to get a tether short enough to measure you."

"Ha, ha, ha, that's right good—divil a man livin' makes me laugh so much as—why, then, Frank Maguire, too!—throth, Frank, I'm proud to see you well—an' how are you, man? and—well, in throth I am happy to see you lookin' so well, and in good health; an' whisper, Frank, it's your own fau't that I'm not enquirin' for the wife and childre."

"An' I can return the compliment, Toal; it's a shame for both of us to be bachelors at this time o' day."

"Ah," said the little fellow, "I wasn't Frank Maguire, one of the best lookin' boys in the barony, an' the most respected, an' why not? Well, divil a thing afther all like the ould blood; an' if I wanted a pure dhrop of that same, may be I don't know where to go to look for it—may be I don't, I say!"

"It's Toal's fault that he wasn't married many a year ago," said Art; "he refused more wives, Frank, than e'er a boy of his years from this to Jinglety cooch—divil a lie in it; sure he'll tell you himself."

Now, as Toal is to appear occasionally, and to be alluded to from time to time in this narrative, we shall give the reader a short sketch or outline of his physical appearance and moral character.

In three words, then, he had all his father's vices multiplied tenfold, and not one of his good qualities, such as they were. His hair was of that nondescript colour which partakes at once of the red, the fair, and the auburn : it was a bad dirty dun, but harmonized with his complexion to a miracle. That complexion, indeed, was no common one ; as we said, it was one of those which, no matter how frequently it might have been scrubbed, always presented the undeniable evidences of dirt so thoroughly ingrained into the pores of the skin, that no process could remove it, short of flaying him alive. His vile, dingy dun bristles stood out in all directions from his head, which was so shaped as to defy admeasurement ; the little rascal's body was equally ill-made ; and as for his limbs, we have already described them, as reaping-hooks of flesh and blood, terminated by a pair of lark-heeled feet, as flat as smoothing irons. Now, be it known that, notwithstanding these disadvantages, little Toal looked upon himself as an Adonis upon a small scale, and did certainly believe that scarcely any female on whom he threw his fascinating eye could resist being enamoured of him. This, of course, having become generally known, was taken advantage of ; and many a merry country girl amused both herself and others at his expense, whilst he imagined her to be perfectly serious.

“ Then how did you escape at all,” said

Frank—"you that the girls are so fond of?"

"You may well ax," said Toal; "but at any rate, it's the divil entirely to have them *too* fond of you. There's *raison* in every thing, but wanst a woman takes a strong fancy to the cut of your face, you're done for until you get rid of her. Throth I suffered as much persecution that way as would make a good batch o' marthyrs. However, what can one do?"

"It's a hard case, Toal," said Art; "an' I b'lieve you're as badly off, if not worse, now than ever."

"In that respect," replied Toal, "I'm ladin' the life of a murdherer. I can't set my face out but there's a pursuit after me—chased an' hunted like a bag fox; devil a lie I'm tellin' you."

"But do you intend to marry still, Toal?" asked Frank; "bekaise if you don't, it would be only *raisonable* for you to make it generally known, that your mind's made up to die a bachelor."

"I wouldn't bring the penalty an' expenses of a wife an' family on me, for the handsomest woman livin'," said Toal. "Oh no; the Lord in mercy forbid that! Amin, I pray."

"But," said Art, "is it fair play to the girls not to let that be generally known, Toal?"

"Hut," replied the other, "let them pick it out of their larnin', the thieves. Sure they persecuted me to such a degree, that they deserve no

mercy at my hands. So, Art," he proceeded, "you've got another mouth to feed! Oh, the Lord pity you! If you go on this way, what 'ill become of you at last?"

"Don't you know," replied Art, "that God always fits the back to the burden, and that he never sends a mouth, but he sends something to fill it."

The little extortioner shrugged his shoulders, and raising his eye-brows, turned up his eyes—as much as to say, what a pretty notion of life you have with such opinions as these!

"Upon my word, Toal," said Art, "the young lady we've got home to us is a beauty; at all events, her godfathers need not be ashamed of her."

"If she's like her own father or mother," replied Toal, once more resuming the sugar-candy style, "she can't be any thing else than a beauty. It's well known that sich a couple never stood undher the roof of Aughindrummon Chapel, nor walked the street of Ballykeerin."

Frank winked at Art, who, instead of returning the wink, as he ought to have done, shut both his eyes, and then looked at Toal with an expression of great compassion—as if he wished to say, poor fellow, I don't think he can be so bad-hearted as the world gives him credit for.

"Come, Toal," he replied, laughing, "none of your bother now. Ay was there, many a finer couple under the same roof, and on the same

street ; so no palaver, my man. But are you prepared to stand for the *girsha* ? You know it's nearly a month since I axed you."

"To be sure I am ; but who's the mid-wife ?"

"Ould Kate Sharpe ; as lucky a woman as ever come about one's house."

"Throth, then, I'm sorry for that," said Toal, "for she's a woman I don't like ; an' I now say before hand, that the devil a *traneen* she'll be the better of me, Art."

"Settle that," replied Art, "between you ; at all events be ready on Sunday next—the christenin's fixed for it."

After some farther chat, Toal, who we should have informed our readers, had removed from his father's old residence into Ballykeerin, took his departure, quite proud at the notion of being a godfather at all ; for in truth it was the first occasion on which he ever had an opportunity of arriving at that honour.

Art was a strictly conscientious man ; so much so, indeed, that he never defrauded a human being to the value of a farthing ; and as for truth, it was the standard principle of his whole life. Honesty, truth, and sobriety are, indeed, the three great virtues upon which all that is honourable, prosperous, and happy is founded. Art's conscientious scruples were so strong, that although in point of fact the term of his path had expired at twelve o'clock in the forenoon, he would not per-

mit himself to taste a drop of spirits until after twelve at night.

"It's best," said he to his brother, "to be on the safe side at all events—a few hours is neither one way or the other. We haven't now more than a quarther to go, and then for a tight drop to wet my whistle, an' dhrink the little *girsha's* health an' her mother's. Throth I've put in a good apprenticeship to sobriety, any how. Come Madjey," he added, addressing the servant maid, "put down the kettle till we have a little jorum of our own; Frank here and myself; and all of yez."

"Very little jorum will go far wid me, you know, Art," replied his brother; "an' if you take my advice, you'll not go beyond bounds yourself either."

"Throth, Frank, an' I'll not take either your's nor any other body's, until little Kate's christened. I think that afther a fast of seven years I'm entitled to a stretch."

"Well, well," said his brother, "I see you're on for it; but as you said yourself a while ago, it's best to be on the safe side, you know."

"Why, dang it, Frank, sure you don't imagine I'm goin' to drink the town dhry; there's *raison* in every thing."

At length the kettle was boiled, and the punch made. Art took his tumbler in hand, and rose up; he looked at it, then glanced at his brother, who observed that he got pale and agitated.

"What ails you?" said he; "is there any thing wrong wid you?"

"I'm thinkin'," replied Art, "of what I suffered wanst by it; an' besides, it's so long since I tasted it, that somehow I jist feel for all the world as if the oath was scarcely off of me yet, or as if I was doin' what's not right."

"That's mere weakness," said Frank; "but still, if you have any scruple, don't drink it; be-
kaise the truth is, Art, you couldn't have a scruple that will do you more good than one against liquor."

"Well, I'll only take this tumbler an' another to-night; and then we'll go to bed, plaise goodness."

His agitation then passed away, and he drank a portion of the liquor.

"I'm thinkin', Art," said Frank, "that it wouldn't be aisy to find two men that has a better right to be thankful to God for the good fortune we've both had, than yourself and me. The Lord has been good to me, for I'm thrivin' to my heart's content, and savin' money every day."

"And glory be to his holy name," said Art, looking with a strong sense of religious feeling upwards, "so am I; and if we both hould to this, we'll die rich, plaise goodness. I have saved up very well too; and here I sit this night as happy a man as is in Europe. The world's flowin' on me, an' I want for nothin'; I have good health, a clear conscience, and every thing that a

man in my condition of life can stand in need of, or wish for ; glory be to God for it all !”

“ Amen,” said Frank ; “ glory be to his name for it !”

“ But, Frank,” said Art, “ there’s one thing that I often wonder at, an’ indeed so does every one a’most.”

“ What is that, Art ?”

“ Why, that you don’t think o’ marrying. Sure you have good means to keep a wife and rear a family now ; an’ of course we all wonder that you don’t.”

“ Indeed to tell you the truth, Art, I don’t know myself what’s the raison of it—the only wife I think of is my business ; but any way, if you was to see the patthorn of married life there is undher the roof wid me, you’d not be in much consate wid marriage yourself, if you were a bachelor.”

“ Why,” inquired the other, “ don’t they agree ?”

“ Ay do they, so well that they get sometimes into very close an’ lovin’ grips together ; if ever there was a scald alive she’s one o’ them, an’ him that was wanst so careless and aisey tempered, she has now made him as bad as herself—has trained him regularly until he has a tongue that would face a ridgment. Tut, sure divil a week that they don’t flake one another, an’ half my time’s taken up reddin’ them.”

“ Did you ever happen to get the reddin’ blow ? eh ? ha, ha, ha !”

"No, not yet ; but the truth is, Art, that an ill-tongued wife has driven many a husband to ruin, an' only that I'm there to pay attention to the business, he'd be a poor drunken beggarman long ago, an' all owin' to her vile temper."

"Does she dhrink?"

"No, sorra dhrop. This wickedness all comes natural to her. She wouldn't be aisy out of hot wather, and poor Jack's parboiled in it every day in the year."

"Well, it's I that have got the treasure, Frank. From the day that I first saw her face, till the minute we're spakin' in, I never knew her temper to turn—always the same sweet word, the same flow of spirits, and the same light laugh. Her love an' affection for me and the childber there couldn't be language found for. Come, throth we'll drink her health in another tumbler, and a speedy uprise to her, asthore machree that she is, an' when I think of how she set every one of her people at defiance, and took her lot wid myself so nobly, my heart burns wid love for her ; ay, I feel my very heart burnin' widin me."

Two tumblers were again mixed, and Margaret's health was drank.

"Here's her health," said Art. "May God grant her long life and happiness!"

"Amen!" responded Frank, "an' may he grant that she'll never know a sorrowful heart!"

Art laid down his tumbler, and covered his eyes with his hands for a minute or two—

“I’m not ashamed, Frank,” said he, “I’m not a bit ashamed of these tears—she deserves them—where is her aiquil? oh, where is her aiquil? It’s she herself that has the tear for the distresses of her fellow-creatures, an’ the ready hand to relieve them. May the Almighty shower down his blessins on her.”

“Them tears do you credit,” replied Frank; “and although I always thought well of you, Art, and liked you betther than any other of the family—although I didn’t say much about it—still, I tell you, I think betther of you this minute than I ever did in my life.”

“There’s only one thing in the wide world that’s throublin’ her,” said Art, “an’ that is, that she hadn’t her parents’ blessin’ when she marrid me, nor since; for ould Murray’s as stiff-necked as a mule, an’ the more he’s driven to do a thing the less he’ll do it.”

“In that case,” observed Frank, “the best plan is to let him alone. May be when it’s not axed for he’ll give it.”

“I wish he would,” said Art, “for Margaret’s sake; it would take away a good deal of uneasiness from her mind.”

The conversation afterwards took several turns, and embraced a variety of topics, till the second tumbler was finished.

“Now,” said Art, “as there’s but the two

of us, and in regard of the occasion that's in it, throth we'll just take one more a piece."

"No," replied Frank, "I never go beyant two; and you said you wouldn't."

"Hut, man, divil a mather for that. Sure there's only ourselves two, as I said, an' where's the harm? Throth it's a long time since I felt myself so comfortable; an' besides, it's not every night we have you wid us. Come, Frank, one more in honour of the occasion."

"Another drop won't cross my lips this night," returned his brother firmly; "so you needn't be mixin' it."

"Sorra foot you'll go to bed to-night till you take another. There now, it's mixed, so you know you *must* take it now."

"Not a drop."

"Well, for the sake of poor little Kate, that you're to stand for; come Frank, death alive man!"

"Would my drinkin' it do Kate any good?"

"Hut, man alive, sure if one was to lay down the law that way upon every thing, they might as well be out of the world at wanst. Come, Frank."

"No, Art, I said I wouldn't, and I won't break my word."

"But, sure, that's only a trifle. Take the liquor. The sorra betther tumbler of punch ever was made: it's Barney Scaddhan's whiskey."*

* Scaddhan, a herring, a humorous nick-name bestowed upon him, because he made the foundation of his fortune by selling herrings.

"An' if Barney Scaddhan keeps good whiskey, is that any reason why I should break my word? or would you have me get dhrunk because his liquor's betther than another man's?"

"Well, for the sake of poor Margaret, then— an' she so fond of you. Sure many a time she tould me that sorra brother-in-law ever she had she likes so well; an' I know it's truth; that I may never handle a plane but it is. Dang it, Frank, don't be so stiff."

"I never was stiff, Art; but I always was, and always will be, firm, when I know I'm in the right. As I said about the child, what good would my drinkin' that tumbler of punch do Margaret? None in life. It would do her no good, and it would do myself harm. Sure we *did* drink her health."

"An' is that your respect for her," said Art, in a huff; "if that's it, why—"

"There's not a man livin' respects her more highly, or knows her worth betther than I do," replied Frank, interrupting him, "but I simply ax you, Art, what mark of true respect would the fact of my drinkin' that tumbler of punch be to her? The world's full of these foolish errors, and bad ould customs, and the sooner they're laid aside, an' proper ones put in their place, the betther."

"Oh, very well, Frank, the sorra one o' me will ask you to take it agin. I only say, that if I was in your house, as you are in mine, I

wouldn't break squares about a beggarly tumbler of punch."

"So much the worse, Art, I would rather you would. There now, you have taken your third tumbler, yet you said when we sat down that you'd confine yourself to two: is that keepin' your word? I know you may call breakin' it now a trifle, but I tell you, that when a man begins to break his word in trifles, he'll soon go on to greater things, and may be end widout much regardin' it in any thing."

"You don't mane to say, Frank, or to hint, that ever I'd come to sich a state as that I wouldn't regard my word."

"I do not; but even if I did, by followin' up this coorse you'd put yourself in the right way of comin' to it."

"Throth I'll not let this other one be lost either," he added, drawing over to him the tumbler which he had filled for his brother; "I've an addition to my family—the child an' mother doin' bravely, an' didn't taste a dhrop these seven long years. Here's your health, at all events, Frank, an' may the Lord put it into your heart to marry a wife, an' be as happy as I am. Here, Madgey, come here, I say; take that whiskey an' sugar, an' mix yourselves a jorum. It's far in the night, but no matther for that. An' see, before you mix it, go an' bring my own darlin' Art, till he dhrinks his mother's health."

"Why, now, Art," began his brother, "is it

possible that you can have the conscience to taich the poor boy such a cursed habit so soon? What are you about this minute but trainin' him up to what may be his own destruction yet?"

"Come, now, Frank, none of your moralizin' ;" the truth is, that the punch was beginning rapidly to affect his head ; "none of your moralizin' ; throth it's a preacher you ought to be, or a lawyer, to lay down the law. Here, Madgey, bring him to me. That's my son, that there isn't the like of in Ballykeerin, any way. Eh, Frank, it's ashamed of him I ought to be, isn't it? Kiss me, Art, and then kiss your uncle Frank—the best uncle that ever broke the world's bread is the same Frank. That's a good boy, Art. Come, now, drink your darlin' mother's health in this glass of brave punch. My mother's health, say ; long life and happiness to her! That's a man ; toss it off at wanst—bravo! Arra, Frank, didn't he do that manly? The Lord love him, where 'ud you get sich a fine swaddy as he is of his age? Oh, Frank, what 'ud become of me if any thing happened that boy? it's a mad-house would hould me soon. May the Lord in heaven save and guard him from all evil and danger!"

Frank saw that it was useless to remonstrate with him at that moment ; for the truth is, intoxication was setting in fast, and all his influence over him was gone.

"Here, Atty, before you go to bed agin, jist

a weeshy sup more to drink your little sisther's health. Sure Kate Sharpe brought you home a little sisther, Atty."

"The boy's head will not be able to stand so much," said Frank. "You will make him tipsy."

"Divil a tipsy; sure it's only a mere *draineen*."

He then made the little fellow drink the baby's health, after which he was despatched to bed.

"Throth it's in for a penny in for a pound wid myself. I know, Frank, that—that there's something or other wrong wid my head, or at any rate wid my eyes; for everything, somehow, is movin'. Is everything movin', Frank?"

"You think so," said Frank, "because you're fast getting tipsy, if you arn't tipsy all out."

"Well, then, if I'm tip—tipsy, divil a bit the worse I can be by another tumbler. Come, Frank, here's the ould blood of Ireland—the Maguires of Fermanagh! And now, Frank, I tell you, it would more become you to drink that toast, than to be sittin' there like an oracle, as you are; for, upon my sowl, you're nearly as bad. But Frank."

"Well, Art."

"Isn't little Toal Finigan a civil little fellow—that is—is—if he was well made. 'There never stood,' says he, 'sich a couple in the chapel of—Aughindrumon, nor there never walked sich a

couple up or down the street of Ballykeerin—that's the chat, says he : an' whisper, Frank, ne—neither did there. Whe—where is Margaret's aiquil, I'd—I'd like to know ? an' as for me, I'll measure myself across the shouldhers against e'er a—a man, woman, or child in—in the parish. Co—come here, now, Frank, till I me—measure the small o' my leg ag—against yours ; or if—if that makes you afeard, I'll measure the—the ball of my leg against the ball of yours. There's a wrist, Frank ; look at that ; jist look at it."

" I see it ; it is a powerful wrist."

" But feel it."

" Tut, Art, sure I see it."

" D—n it, man, jist feel it—feel the breadth of—of that bone. Augh—that's the—the wrist ; so anyhow here's little Toal Finigan's health, an' I don't care what they say, I like little Toal, an' I will like little Toal ; bekaise—aise if—if he was the divil, as—as they say he is, in disguise—ha, ha, ha ! he has a civil tongue in his head."

He then commenced and launched out into the most extravagant praises of himself, his wife, his children ; and from these he passed to the cold blood of Ireland, and the Fermanagh Maguires.

" Where," he said, " whe-where is there in the county, or any where else, a family that has sich blood as ours in their veins ? Very well ; an' aren't we proud of it, as we have a right to be. Where's the Maguire that would do a mane or shabby act ? tha—that's what I'd like to know.

Isn't the word of a Maguire looked upon as a quail to to an-another man's oath ; an' where's the man of them that was-as ever known to break it? Eh Frank? No; steady-ed-steady's the word wid the Maguires, and honour bright.

Frank was about to remind him that he had in his own person given a proof that night that a Maguire could break his word, and commit a disreputable action besides; but as he saw it was useless, he judiciously declined then making any observation whatsoever upon it.

After a good deal of entreaty, Frank succeeded in prevailing on him to go to bed; in which, however, he failed, until Art had inflicted on him three woful songs, each immensely long, and sung in that peculiarly fascinating drawl, which is always produced by intoxication. At length, and when the night was more than half spent, he assisted him to bed—a task of very considerable difficulty, were it not that it was relieved by his receiving from the tipsy man several admirable precepts, and an abundance of excellent advice touching his conduct in the world; not forgetting religion, on which he dwelt with a maudlin solemnity of manner, that was, or would have been to strangers, extremely ludicrous. Frank, however, could not look upon it with levity. He understood his brother's character and foibles too well, and feared that notwithstanding his many admirable qualities, his vanity and want of firmness, or, in other words, of self-dependence, might overbalance them all.

The next morning his brother Frank was obliged to leave betimes, and consequently had no opportunity of advising or remonstrating with him. On rising, he felt sick and feverish, and incapable of going into his work-shop. The accession made to his family being known, several of his neighbours came in to inquire after the health of his wife and infant ; and as Art, when left to his own guidance, had never been remarkable for keeping a secret, he made no scruple of telling them that he had got drunk the night before, and was, of course, quite out of order that morning. Among the rest, the first to come in was little Toal Finnigan, who, in addition to his other virtues, possessed a hardness of head, by which we mean a capacity for bearing drink, that no liquor, or no quantity of liquor could overcome.

"Well," said Toal, "sure it's very reasonable that you should be out of ordher ; after bein' seven years from it, it doesn't come so natural to you as it would do. How adiver, you know that there's but the one cure for it—a hair of the same dog that bit you ; and if you're afear'd to take the same hair by yourself, why I'll take a tuft of it wid you, an' we'll dhrink the wife's health—my ould sweetheart—and the little sthranger's."

"Throth I believe you're right," said Art, "in regard to the cure ; so in the name of goodness we'll have a *gauliogue* to begin the day wid, an' set the hair straight on us."

During that day, Art was neither drunk nor

sober, but halfway between the two states. He went to his workshop about two o'clock ; but his journeymen and apprentices could smell the strong whiskey off him, and perceive an occasional thickness of pronunciation in his speech, which a good deal surprised them. When evening came, however, his neighbours, whom he had asked in, did not neglect to attend ; the bottle was again produced, and poor Art, the principle of restraint having now being removed, re-enacted much the same scene as on the preceding night, with this exception only, that he was now encouraged instead of being checked or reproved.

There were now only three days to elapse until the following Sabbath, on which day the child was to be baptized ; one of them, that is, the one following his first intoxication with Frank was lost to him, for, as we have said, though not precisely drunk, he was not in a condition to work, nor properly to give directions. The next he felt himself in much the same state, but with still less of regret.

"The truth is," said he, "I won't be rightly able to do anything till afther this christenin', so that I may set down the remaindher o' the week as lost ; well, sure that won't break me at any rate. It's long since I lost a week before, and we must only make up for it ; afther the christenin' I'll work double tides."

This was all very plausible reasoning, but very fallacious notwithstanding ; indeed, it is this de-

scription of logic which conceals the full extent of a man's errors from himself, and which has sent thousands forward on their career to ruin. Had Art for instance, been guided by his steady and excellent brother, or what would have been better still, by his own good sense and firmness, he would have got up the next morning in health, with an easy mind, and a clear conscience, and been able to resume his work as usual. Instead of that, the night's debauch produced its natural consequences, feverishness and indisposition, which, by the aid of a bad proverb, and worse company, were removed by the very cause which produced them. The second night's bebauch lost the following day, and then, forsooth, the week was nearly gone, and it wasn't worth while to change the system ; as if it was ever too soon to mend, or as if even a single day's work were not a matter of importance to a mechanic. Let any man who feels himself reasoning as Art Maguire did, rest assured that there is an evil principle within him, which, unless he strangle it by prompt firmness, and a strong conviction of moral duty, will ultimately be his destruction.

There was once a lake, surrounded by very beautiful scenery, to which its waters gave a fine and picturesque effect ; this lake was situated on an elevated part of the country, and a little below it, facing the west, was a precipice, which terminated a lovely valley, that gradually expanded until it was lost in the rich campaign country be-

low. From this lake there was no outlet of water whatsoever, but its shores at the same time were rich and green, having been all along devoted to pasture. Now, it so happened that a boy, whose daily occupation was to tend his master's sheep, went one day when the winds were strong to the edge of the lake, on the side to which they blew, and began to amuse himself by making a small channel in the soft earth with his naked foot. This small indentation was gradually made larger and larger by the waters—whenever the wind blew strongly in that direction—until, in the course of time, it changed into a deep chasm, which wore away the earth that intervened between the lake and the precipice. The result may be easily guessed. When the last portion of the earth gave way the waters of the lake precipitated themselves upon the beautiful and peaceful glen, carrying death and destruction in their course, and leaving nothing but a dark unsightly morass behind them. So is it with the mind of man. When he gives the first slight assent to a wrong tendency, or vicious resolution, he resembles the shepherd's boy, who, unconscious of the consequences that followed, made the first small channel in the earth with his naked foot. The vice or the passion will enlarge itself by degrees until all power of resistance is removed, and the heart becomes a victim to the impetuosity of an evil principle to which no assent of the will ever should have been given.

Art, as we have said, lost the week, and then came Sunday for the Christening. On that day, of course, an extra cup was but natural, especially as it would put an end to his indulgence on the one hand and his idleness on the other. Monday morning would enable him to open a new leaf, and as it was the last day—that is, Sunday was—why dang it, he would take a good honest jorum. Frank, who had a greater regard for Art's character than it appeared Art himself had, spoke to him privately on the morning of the christening, as to the necessity and decency of keeping himself sober on that day; but, alas! during this friendly admonition, he could perceive that early as it was, his brother was not exactly in a state of perfect sobriety. His remonstrances were very unpalatable to Art, and as a consciousness of his conduct, added to the nervousness produced by drink, had both combined to produce irritability of temper, he addressed himself more harshly to his brother than he had ever done in his life before. Frank, for the sake of peace, gave up the task, although he saw clearly enough that the christening was likely to terminate, at least so far as Art was concerned, in nothing less than a drunken debauch. This, indeed, was true Little Toal, who drank more liquor than any two among them, and Frank himself, were the only sober persons present, all the rest having successfully imitated the example set them by Art, who was carried to bed at an early hour in

the evening. This was but an indifferent preparation for his resolution to commence work on Monday morning, as the event proved. When the morning came he was incapable of work, a racking pain in the head, and sickness of stomach, were the comfortable assurances of his inability. Here was another day lost, but finding that *it also* was irretrievably gone, he thought it would be no great harm to try the old cure—a hair of the dog—as before, and it did not take much force of reasoning to persuade himself to that course. In this manner he went on, losing day after day, until another week was lost. At length he found himself in his workshop, considerably wrecked and debilitated, striving with tremulous and unsteady hand, to compensate for his lost time; it was now, however, too late—the evil habit had been contracted—the citadel had been taken—the waters had been poisoned at their source—the small track with the naked foot had been made. From this time forward he did little but make resolutions to-day, which he broke to-morrow; in the course of some time he began to drink with his own workmen, and even admitted his apprentices to their potations. Toal Finigan, and about six or eight dissolute and drunken fellows, inhabitants of Ballykeerin, were his constant companions, and never had they a drinking bout that he was not sent for; sometimes they would meet in his own workshop, which was turned into a tap-room, and there drink the better part of

the day. Of course the workmen could not be forgotten in their potations, and as a natural consequence, all work was suspended, business at a stand, time lost, and morals corrupted.

His companions now availed themselves of his foibles, which they drew out into more distinct relief. Joined to an overweening desire to hear himself praised, was another weakness, which proved to be very beneficial to his companions; this was a swaggering and consequential determination, when tipsy, to pay the whole reckoning, and to treat every one he knew.

He was a Maguire—he was a gentleman—had the old blood in his veins, and that he might never handle a plane, if any man present should pay a shilling, so long as he was to the fore. This was an argument in which he always had the best of it; his companions taking care, even if he happened to forget it, that some chance word or hint should bring it to his memory.

“Here, Barney Scaddhan—Barney, I say, what’s the reckonin’, you sinner?”

“Now Art Maguire, devil a penny of *this* you’ll pay for—you’re too ginerous, an’ have the heart of a prince.”

“And kind family for him to have the heart of a prince, sure we all know what the Fermagh Maguires wor; of course we won’t let *him* pay.”

“Toal Finigan, do you want me to rise my hand to you? I tell you that a single man here

won't pay a penny o' reckonin, while I'm to the good; and, to make short work of it, by the contents o' the book, I'll strike the first of ye that'll attempt it. Now!"

"Faix, an' I for one," said Toal, "won't come undher your fist; it's little whiskey ever I'd drink if I did."

"Well, well," the others would exclaim, "that ends it; howendiver, never mind, Art, I'll engage we'll have our revenge on you for that—the next meetin' you won't carry it all your own way; we'll be as stiff as you'll be stout, my boy, although you beat us out of it now."

"Augh," another would say, in a whisper especially designed for him, "by the livin' farmer there never was one, even of the Maguires, like him, an' that's no lie."

Art would then pay the reckoning with the air of a nobleman, or if he happened to be without money, he would order it to be scored to him, for as yet his credit was good.

It is wonderful to reflect how vanity blinds common sense, and turns all the power of reason and judgment to nothing. Art was so thoroughly infatuated by his own vanity, that he was utterly incapable of seeing through the gross and selfish flattery with which they plied him. Nay, when praising him, or when *sticking him in* for drink, as it is termed, they have often laughed in his very face, so conscious were they that it could be done with impunity.

This course of life could not fail to produce suitable consequences to his health, his reputation, and his business. His customers began to find now that the man whose word had never been doubted, and whose punctuality was proverbial, became so careless and negligent in attending to his orders, that it was quite useless to rely upon his promises, and, as a very natural consequence, they began to drop off one after another, until he found to his cost that a great number of his best and most respectable supporters ceased to employ him.

When his workmen, too, saw that he had got into tipling and irregular habits, and that his eye was not, as in the days of his industry, over them, they naturally became careless and negligent, as did the apprentices also. Nor was this all, the very individuals who had been formerly remarkable for steadiness, industry, and sobriety—for Art would then keep no other—were now many of them corrupted by his own example, and addicted to idleness and drink. This placed him in a very difficult position ; for how, we ask, could he remonstrate with them so long as he himself transgressed more flagrantly than they did ? For this reason he was often forced to connive at outbreaks of drunkenness and gross cases of neglect, which no *sobber* man would suffer in those whom he employed.

“ Take care of your business, and your business will take care of you,” is a good and a whole-

some proverb, that cannot be too strongly impressed on the minds of the working classes. Art began to feel surprised that his business was declining, but as yet his good sense was strong enough to point out to him the cause of it. His mind now became disturbed, for whilst he felt conscious that his own neglect and habits of dissipation occasioned it, he also felt that he was but a child in the strong grasp of his own propensities. This was anything but a consoling reflection, and so long as it lasted he was gloomy, morbid, and peevish; his excellent wife was the first to remark this, and, indeed, was the first that had occasion to remark it, for even in this stage of his life, the man who had never spoken to her, or turned his eye upon her, but with tenderness and affection, now began, especially when influenced by drink, to give manifestations of temper that grieved her to the heart. Abroad, however, he was the same good-humoured fellow as ever, with a few rare exceptions—when he got quarrelsome and fought with his companions. His workmen all were perfectly aware of his accessibility to flattery, and some of them were not slow to avail themselves of it: these were the idle and unscrupulous, who, as they resembled himself, left nothing unsaid or undone to maintain his good opinion, and they succeeded. His business now declined so much that he was obliged to dismiss some of them, and as if he had been fated to ruin, the honest and independent, who scorned to flatter his weaknesses,

were the very persons put out of his employment, because their conduct was a silent censure upon his habits, and the men he retained were those whom he himself had made drunken and profligate by his example ; so true is it that a drunkard is his own enemy in a thousand ways.

Here, then, is our old friend Art falling fast away from the proverbial integrity of his family—his circumstances are rapidly declining—his business running to a point—his reputation sullied, and his temper becoming sharp and vehement. These are strong indications of mismanagement, neglect, and folly, or, in one word, of a propensity to drink.

About a year and a half has now elapsed, and Art, in spite of several most determined resolutions to reform, is getting still worse in every respect. It is not to be supposed, however, that during this period he has not had visitations of strong feeling—of repentance—remorse—or that love of drink had so easy a victory over him as one would imagine. No such thing. These internal struggles sometimes affected him even unto agony, and he has frequently wept bitter tears on finding himself the victim of this terrible habit. He had not, however, the courage to look into his own condition with a firm eye, or to examine the state of either his heart or his circumstances with the resolution of a man who knows that he must suffer pain by the inspection. Art could not bear the pain of such

an examination, and, in order to avoid feeling it, he had recourse to the oblivion of drink;—not reflecting that the adoption of every such remedy for care resembles the wisdom of the man who, when raging under the tortures of thirst, attempted to allay them by drinking sea water. Drink relieved him for a moment, but he soon found that in his case the remedy was only another name for the disease.

It is not necessary to assure our readers that during Art's unhappy progress hitherto, his admirable brother Frank felt wrung to the heart by his conduct. All that good advice, urged with good feeling and good sense, could do, was tried on him, but to no purpose. He ultimately lost his temper on being reasoned with, and flew into a passion with Frank, whom he abused for interfering, as he called it, in business which did not belong to him. Notwithstanding this bluster, however, there was no man whom he feared so much; in fact, he dreaded his very appearance, and would go any distance out of his way rather than come in contact with him. He felt Frank's moral ascendancy too keenly, and was too bitterly sensible of the neglect with which he had treated his affectionate and friendly admonitions, to meet him with composure. Indeed we must say, that, independently of his brother Frank, he was not left to his own impulses without many a friendly and sincere advice. The man had been so highly respected—

his name was so stainless—his conduct so good, so blameless—he stood forth such an admirable pattern of industry, punctuality, and sobriety—that his departure from all these virtues occasioned general regret and sorrow. Every friend hoped that he would pay attention to *his* advice, and every friend tried it; but, unfortunately, every friend failed. Art, now beyond the reach of reproof, acted as every man like him acts; he avoided those who, because they felt an interest in his welfare, took the friendly liberty of attempting to rescue him, and consequently associated only with those who drank with him, flattered him, skulked upon him, and laughed at him.

One friend, however, he had, who, above all others, first in place and in importance, we cannot overlook—that friend was his admirable and affectionate wife. Oh, in what language can we adequately describe her natural and simple eloquence, her sweetness of disposition, her tenderness, her delicacy of reproof, and her earnest struggles to win back her husband from the habits which were destroying him! And in the beginning she was often successful for a time, and many a tear of transient repentance has she occasioned him to shed, when she succeeded in touching his heart, and stirring his affection for her and for their children.

In circumstances similar to Art's, however, we first feel our own errors; we then feel grate-

ful to those who have the honesty to reprove us for them : by and bye, on finding that we are advancing on the wrong path, we begin to disrelish the advice, as being only an unnecessary infliction of pain. Having got so far as to disrelish the advice, we soon begin to disrelish the adviser and ultimately we become so thoroughly wedded to our own selfish vices, as to hate every one who would take us out of their trammels.

When Art found that the world, as he said, was going against him, instead of rallying—as he might, and ought to have done—he began to abuse the world, and attribute to it all the misfortunes which he himself, and not the world, had occasioned him. The world, in fact, is nothing to any man but the reflex of himself. If you treat yourself well, and put yourself out of the power of the world, the world will treat you well, and respect you ; but if you neglect yourself, do not at all be surprised that the world and your friends will neglect you also. So far the world acts with great justice and propriety, and takes its cue from your own conduct. You cannot, therefore, blame the world without first blaming yourself.

Two years had now elapsed, and Art's business was nearly gone. He had been obliged to discharge the drunken fellows we spoke of, but not until they had assisted in a great measure to complete his ruin. Two years of dissipation, neglect of business, and drunkenness, were quite

sufficient to make Art feel that it is a much easier thing to fall into poverty and contempt, than to work a poor man's way, from early struggle and the tug of life, to ease and independence.

His establishment was now all but closed ; the two apprentices had scarcely anything to do, and, indeed, generally amused themselves in the workshop by playing Spoil Five—a fact which was discovered by Art himself, who came on them unexpectedly one day, when tipsy ; but, as he happened to be in an extremely good humour, he sat down and took a hand along with them. This was a new element of enjoyment to him, and, instead of reproving them for their dishonest conduct, he suffered himself to be drawn into the habit of gambling ; and so strongly did this grow upon him, that from henceforth he refused to participate in any drinking bout unless the parties were to play for the liquor. For this he had now neither temper nor coolness. While drinking upon the ordinary plan with his companions, he almost uniformly paid the reckoning from sheer vanity, or, in other words, because they managed him ; but now that it depended upon what he considered to be *skill*, nothing ever put him so completely out of temper as to be put in for it. This low gambling became a passion with him ; but it was a passion that proved to be the fruitful cause of fights and quarrels without end. Being seldom either cool or sober, he was

a mere dupe in the hands of his companions; but whether by fair play or foul, the moment he perceived that the game had gone against him, that moment he generally charged his opponents with dishonesty and fraud, and then commenced a fight. Many a time has he gone home beaten, and bruised, and black, and cut, and every way disfigured in these vile and blackguard contests; but so inveterately had this passion for card-playing—that is, gambling for liquor—worked itself into him, that he could not suffer a single day to pass without indulging in it. Defeat of any kind was a thing he could never think of; but for a Maguire—one of the great Fermanagh Maguires—to be beaten at a rascally game of Spoil Five, was not to be endured; the matter was impossible, unless by foul play; and as there was only one method of treating those who could stoop to the practice of foul play, why he seldom lost any time in adopting it. This was to apply the fist; and as he had generally three or four against him, and, as in most instances, he was in a state of intoxication, it usually happened that he received most punishment.

Up to this moment we have not presented Art^e to our readers in any other light than that of an ordinary drunkard, seen tipsy and staggering in the streets, or singing, as he frequently was, or fighting, or playing cards in the public-houses. Heretofore he was not before the world, and in everybody's eye; but he had now become so

common a sight in the town of Ballykeerin, that his drunkenness was no longer a matter of surprise to its inhabitants. At the present stage of his life he could not bear to see his brother Frank ; and his own Margaret, although unchanged and loving as ever, was no longer to him the Margaret that she had been. He felt how much he had despised her advice, neglected her comfort, and forgotten the duties which both God and nature had imposed upon him, with respect to her and their children. These feelings coming upon him during short intervals of reflection, almost drove him mad ; and he has often come home to her and them in a frightful and terrible consciousness that he had committed some great crime, and that she and their children were involved in its consequences.

“ Margaret,” he would say, “ Margaret, what is it I’ve done against you and the childre ? I have done some great crime against you all, for surely if I didn’t, you wouldn’t look as you do—Margaret aethore, where is the colour that was in your cheeks ? And my own Art here—that always pacifies me when nobody else can—even Art doesn’t look what he used to be.”

“ Well, sure he will, Art, dear,” she would reply. “ Now will you let me help you to bed ? it’s late—it’s near three o’clock. Oh, Art, dear, if you were——

“ I won’t go to bed—I’ll stop here where I am, wid my head on the table till mornin’. Now do

you know—come here, Margaret—let me hear you—do you know, and are you sensible of the man you're married to?"

"To be sure I am."

"No, I tell you; I say you are not. There is but one person in the house that knows that."

"You're right, Art, darlin'—you're right. Come here, Atty; go to your father; you know what to say, avick."

"Well, Art," he would continue, "do *you* know who your father is?"

"Ay do I: he's one of **THE GREAT FERMANAGH MAGUIRES**—the greatest family in the kingdom. Isn't *that* it?"

"That's it, Atty darlin'—come an' kiss me for that—yes, I'm one of the *great Fermanagh Maguires*. Isn't that a glorious thing, Atty?"

"Now, Art darlin', will you let me help you to bed—think of the hour it is."

"I won't go, I tell you. I'll sit here wid my head on the table all night. Come here, Atty, Atty, it's wondherful how I love you—above all creatures livin' do I love you. Sure I never refuse to do any thing for you, Atty: do I now?"

"Well, then, will you come to bed for me?"

"To be sure I will, at wanst;" and the unhappy man instantly rose and staggered into his bed-room, aided and supported by his wife and child—for the latter lent whatever little assistance he could give to his drunken father, whom he tenderly loved.

His shop, however, is now closed, the apprentices are gone, and the last miserable source of their support no longer exists. Poverty now sets in, and want, and destitution. He parts with his tools ; but not for the purpose of meeting the demands of his wife and children at home ; no : but for drink—drink—drink—drink. He is now in such a state that he cannot, dares not, reflect, and consequently drink is more necessary to him than ever. His mind, however, is likely soon to be free from the pain of thinking ; for it is becoming gradually debauched and brutified—is sinking, in fact, to the lowest and most pitiable state of degradation. It was then, indeed, that he felt how the world deals with a man who leaves himself depending on it.

His friends had now all abandoned him ; decent people avoided him—he had fallen long ago below pity, and was now an object of contempt. His family at home were destitute : every day brought hunger—positive, absolute want of food, wherewith to support nature. His clothes were reduced to tatters ; so were those of his wife and children. His frame, once so strong and athletic, was now wasted away to half its wonted size ; his hands were thin, tremulous, and fleshless ; his face pale and emaciated ; and his eye dead and stupid. He was now nearly alone in the world. Low and profligate as were his drunken companions, yet *even they* shunned him ; and so contemptuously did they treat him, now that he was

no longer able to pay his way, or enable the scoundrels to swill at his expense, that whenever he happened to enter Barney Scaddhan's tap, while they were in it, they immediately expelled him without ceremony, or Barney did it for them. He now hated home ; there was nothing there for him but cold, naked, shivering destitution. The furniture had gone by degrees for liquor ; tables, chairs, kitchen utensils, bed and bedding, with the exception of a miserable blanket for Margaret and the child, had all been disposed of for about one tenth part of their value. Alas, what a change is this from comfort, industry, independence, and respectability, to famine, wretchedness, and the utmost degradation ! Even Margaret, whose noble heart beat so often in sympathy with the distresses of the poor, has scarcely any one now who will feel sympathy with her own. Not that she was utterly abandoned by all. Many a time have the neighbours, in a stealthy way, brought a little relief, in the shape of food, to her and her children. Sorry are we to say, however, that there were in the town of Ballykeerin persons whom she had herself formerly relieved, and with whom the world went well since, who now shut their eyes against her misery, and refused to assist her. Her lot, indeed, was now a bitter one, and required all her patience, all her fortitude, to enable her to bear up under it. Her husband was sunk down to a pitiable pitch, his mind consisting as it were only of two elements, stupidity

and ill-temper. Up to the disposal of all the furniture, he had never raised his hand to her, or gone beyond verbal abuse: now, however, his temper became violent and brutal. All sense of shame—every pretext for decency—all notions of self-respect were gone, and nothing was left to sustain or to check him. He could not look in upon himself and find one spark of decent pride, or a single principle left that contained the germ of his redemption. He now gave himself over as utterly lost; and consequently felt no scruple to stoop to any act, no matter how mean or contemptible. In the midst of all this degradation, however, there was one recollection which he never gave up; but alas to what different and shameless purposes did he now prostitute it! That which had been in his better days a principle of just pride, a spur to industry, an impulse to honor, and a safeguard to integrity, had now become the catchword of a mendicant—the cant or slang, as it were, of an impostor. He was not ashamed to beg in its name—to ask for whiskey in its name—and to sink, in its name, to the most sordid supplications.

“Will you stand the price of a glass? I’m Art Maguire; *one of the great Maguires of Fermanagh!* Think of the blood of the Maguires, and stand a glass. Barney Scaddhan won’t trust me now; although many a pound and penny of good money I left him.”

“Ay,” the person accosted would reply, “an’

so sign's on you ; you would be a different man to-day, had you visited Barney Scaddhan's seldomer, or kep out of it altogether."

" It's not a sarmon I want ; will you stand the price of a glass ?"

" Not a drop."

" Go to blazes, then, if you won't. I'm a better man than over you wor, an' have better blood in my veins. The great Fermanagh Maguires for ever !"

But hold—we must do the unfortunate man justice. Amidst all this degradation, and crime, and wretchedness, there yet shone undimmed one solitary virtue. This was an abstract but powerful affection for his children, especially for his eldest son, now a fine boy about eight or nine, In his worst and most outrageous moods—when all other influence failed—when the voice of his own Margaret, whom he once loved—oh how well ! fell heedless upon his ears—when neither Frank, nor friend, nor neighbour could manage nor soothe him—let but the finger of his boy touch him, or a tone of his voice fall upon his ear, and he placed himself in his hands, and did whatever the child wished him.

One evening, about this time, Margaret was sitting upon a small hassock of straw, that had been made for little Art, when he began to walk. It was winter, and there was no fire ; a neighbour, however, had out of charity lent her a few dipped rushes, that they might not be in utter darkness.

One of them was stuck against the wall, for they had no candlestick ; and oh ! what a pitiable and melancholy spectacle did its dim and feeble light present ! There she sat, the young, virtuous, charitable, and lovely Margaret of the early portion of our narrative, surrounded by her almost naked children—herself with such thin and scanty covering as would wring any heart but to know it. Where now was her beauty ? Where her mirth, cheerfulness, and all her lightness of heart ? Where ? Let her ask that husband who once loved her so well, but who loved his own vile excesses and headlong propensities better. There, however, she sat, with a tattered cap on, through the rents of which her raven hair, once so beautiful and glossy, came out in matted elf-locks, and hung down about her thin and wasted neck. Her face was pale and ghastly as death ; her eyes were without fire—full of languor—full of sorrow ; and alas, beneath one of them, was too visible by its discolouration, the foul mark of her husband's brutality. To this had their love, their tenderness, their affection come ; and by what ? Alas ! by the curse of liquor—the demon of drunkenness—and want of manly resolution. She sat, as we have said, upon the little hassock, whilst shivering on her bosom was a sickly looking child, about a year old, to whom she was vainly endeavouring to communicate some of her own natural warmth. The others, three in number, were grouped together for the same reason ;

for poor little Atty, who, though so very young, was his mother's only support, and hope, and consolation—sat with an arm about each, in order, as well as he could, to keep off the cold—the night being stormy and bitter. Margaret sat rocking herself to and fro, as those do who indulge in sorrow, and crooning for her infant the sweet old air of "*Tha ma cullha's na dhuska me,*" or, "I am asleep and don't waken me!"—a tender but melancholy air, which had something peculiarly touching in it, on the occasion in question.

"Ah," she said, "I am asleep and don't waken me; if it wasn't for *your sakes*, darlins, it's I that long to be in that sleep that we will never waken from; but sure, lost in misery as we are, what could yez do without me still?"

"What do you mane mammy?" said Atty; "sure doesn't every body that goes to sleep waken out of it?"

"No, darlin'; there's a sleep that nobody wakens from."

"Dat quare sleep, mammy," said a little one. "Oh but me's could, mammy; will we eva have blankets?"

The question, though simple, opened up the cheerless, the terrible future to her view. She closed her eyes, put her hands on them, as if she strove to shut it out, and shivered as much at the apprehension of what was before her, as with the chilly blasts that swept through the windowless house.

"I hope so, dear," she replied ; "for God is good."

"And will he get us blankets, mammy?"

"Yes, darlin', I hope so."

"Me id rady he'd get us sometin' to ait fust, mammy ; I'm starvin' wid hungry ;" and the poor child began to cry for food.

The disconsolate mother was now assailed by the clamorous outcries of nature's first want, that of food. She surveyed her beloved little brood in the feeble light, and saw in all its horror the fearful impress of famine stamped upon their emaciated features, and strangely lighting up their little heavy eyes. She wrung her hands, and looking up silently to heaven, wept aloud for some minutes.

"Childre," she said at length, "have patience, poor things, an' you'll soon get something to eat. I sent over Nanny Hart to my sister's, an' when she comes back ye'll get something ;—so have patience, darlins, till then."

"But, mother," continued little Atty, who could not understand her allusion to the sleep from which there is no awakening ; "what kind of sleep is it that people never waken from?"

"The sleep that's in the grave, Atty dear ; death is the sleep I mean."

"An' would you wish to die, mother?"

"Only for your sake, Atty, and for the sake of the other darlins, if it was the will of God, I would ; and," she added, with a feeling of inde-

scribable anguish, "what have I now to live for but to see you all about me in misery and sorrow!"

The tears as she spoke ran silently, but bitterly down her cheeks.

"When I think of what your poor lost father was," she added, "when we wor happy, and when he was good, and when I think of what he is now—oh, my God, my God," she sobbed out, "my manly young husband, what curse has come over you that has brought you down to this! Curse! oh, *fareer gair*, it's a curse that's too well known in the country—it's the curse that laves many an industrious man's house as ours is this bittner night—it's the curse that takes away good name and comfort, and *honesty*, (*that's* the only thing it has left us)—that takes away the strength of both body and mind—that banishes dacency and shame—that laves many a widow and orphan to the marcy of an unfeelin' world—that fills the jail and the madhouse—that brings many a man and woman to a disgraceful death—an' that tempts us to the commission of every evil;—that curse, darlins, is whiskey—drinkin' whiskey—an' it is drinkin' whiskey that has left us as we are, and that has ruined your father, and destroyed him for ever."

"Well, but there's no other curse over us, mother."

The mother paused a moment—

"No, darlin'," she replied: "not a curse—but

my father and mother both died, and did not give me their blessin'; but now, Atty, don't ask me any thing more about that, bekase I can't tell you." This she added from a feeling of delicacy to her unhappy husband, whom, through all his faults and vices, she constantly held up to her children as an object of respect, affection, and obedience.

Again the little ones were getting importunate for food, and their cries were enough to touch any heart, much less that of a tender and loving mother. Margaret herself felt that some unusual delay must have occurred, or the messenger she sent to her sister must have long since returned; just then a foot was heard outside the door, and there was an impatient cessation of the cries, in the hope that it was the return of Nanny Hart—the door opened, and Toal Finigan entered this wretched abode of sorrow and destitution.

There was something peculiarly hateful about this man, but in the eyes of Margaret there was something intensely so. She knew right well that he had been the worst and most demoralizing companion her husband ever associated with, and she had, besides, every reason to believe that, were it not for his evil influence over the vain and wretched man, he might have overcome his fatal propensity to tipple. She had often told Art this; but little Toal's tongue was too sweet, when aided by his dupe's vanity. Many a time had she observed a devilish leer of satanic triumph in the

mis-shapen little scoundrel's eye, when bringing home her husband in a state of beastly intoxication, and for this reason, independently of her knowledge of his vile and heartless disposition, and infamous character, she detested him. After entering, he looked about him, and even with the faint light of the rush she could mark that his unnatural and revolting features were lit up with a hellish triumph.

"Well, Margaret Murray," said he, "I believe you are now nearly as badly off as you can be; your husband's past hope, and you are as low as a human bein' ever was. I'm now satisfied; you refused to marry me—you made a May-game of me—a laughin' stock of me, and *your* father tould *my* father that I had legs like raipin' hooks! Now, from the day you refused to marry me, I swore I'd never die till I'd have my revinge, and I have it; who has the laugh now, Margaret Murray?"

"You say," she replied calmly, "that I am as low as a human bein' can be, but that's false, Toal Finigan, for I thank God I have committed no crime, and my name is pure and good, which is more than any one can say for you; begone from my place."

"I will," he replied, "but before I go jist let me tell you, that I have the satisfaction to know that, if I'm not much mistaken, it was I that was the principal means of lavin' you as you are, and your respectable husband as he is; so my blessin'

be wid you, an' that's more than your father left you. Raipin' hooks, indeed !"

The little vile Brownie then disappeared.

Margaret, the moment he was gone, immediately turned round, and going to her knees, leant, with her half cold infant still in her arms, against a creaking chair, and prayed with as much earnestness as a distracted heart permitted her. The little ones, at her desire, also knelt, and in a few minutes afterwards when her drunken husband came home, he found his miserable family, grouped as they were in their misery, worshipping God in their own simple and touching manner. His entrance disturbed them, for Margaret knew she must go through the usual ordeal to which his nightly return was certain to expose her.

"I want something to ait," said he.

"Art, dear," she replied—and this was the worst word she ever uttered against him—"Art, dear, I have nothing for you till by an' bye ; but I will then."

"Have you any money ?"

"Money, Art ! oh, where would I get it ? if I had money I wouldn't be without something for you to eat, or the childre here that tasted nothin' since early this mornin'."

"Ah, you're a cursed useless wife," he replied, "you brought nothin' but bad luck to me an' them ; but how could you bring anything else, when you didn't get your father's blessin'."

"But, Art, don't you remember," she said

meekly in reply, "you surely can't forget for whose sake I lost it."

"Well, he's fizzin' now, the hard hearted ould scoundrel, for keepin' it from you; he forgot who you wor married to, the extortin' ould vagabone—to one of the great Fermanagh Maguires, an' he not fit to wipe their shoes. The curse o' heaven upon you an' him, wherever he is! It was an unlucky day to me I ever seen the face of one of you—here, Atty I've some money, some strange fellow at the inn below stood to me for the price of a naggin, an' that blasted Barney Scaddhan wouldn't let me in, bekase, he said, I was a disgrace to his house, the scoundrel."

"The same house was a black sight to you, Art."

"Here, Atty, go off and get me a naggin."

"Wouldn't it be better for you to get something to eat, than to drink it, Art."

"None of your prate, I say, go off an' bring me a naggin o' whiskey, an' don't let the grass grow undher your feet."

The children whenever he came home were awed into silence, but although they durst not speak, there was an impatient voracity visible in their poor features, and now wolfish little eyes, that was a terrible thing to witness. Art took the money, and went away to bring his father the whiskey.

"What's the reason," said he, kindling into sudden fury, "that you didn't provide something

for me to eat? Eh? What's the reason?" and he approached her in a menacing attitude. "You're a lazy, worthless vagabone. Why didn't you get me something to ait, I say? I can't stand this—I'm famished."

"I sent to my sister's," she replied, laying down the child; for she feared that if he struck her and knocked her down, with the child in her arms, it might be injured, probably killed by the fall; "when the messenger comes back from my sister's——"

"D—n yourself and your sister," he replied, striking her a blow at the same time upon the temple. She fell, and in an instant her face was deluged with blood.

"Ay, lie there," he continued, "the loss of the blood will cool you. Hould your tongues, you devils, or I'll throw yez out of the house," he exclaimed to the children, who burst into an uproar of grief on seeing their "mammy," as they called her, lying bleeding and insensible. "That's to taich her not to have something for me to ait. Ay," he proceeded, with a hideous laugh—"ha, ha, ha! I'm a fine fellow—amn't I? There she lies now, and yet she was wanst Margaret Murray!—my own Margaret—that left them all for myself. But, sure if she did, wasn't I one of the great Maguires of Fermanagh? Get up, Margaret; here, I'll help you up, if the divil was in you!"

He raised her as he spoke, and perceived that

consciousness was returning. The first thing she did was to put up her hand to her temple, where she felt the warm blood. She gave him ~~one~~ look of profound sorrow.

"Oh, Art dear," she exclaimed, "Art dear—" her voice failed her, but the tears flowed down her cheeks.

"Margaret," said he, "you needn't spake to me that way. You know, any how, I'm damned—damned—lol de rol lol—tol de rol lol! ha, ha, ha! I have no hope, either here or hereafter—divil a morsel of hope. Isn't that comfortable? eh? Ha, ha, ha!"—another hideous laugh. "Well, no matter; we'll dhrink it out, at all events. Where's Atty, wid the whiskey? Oh, here he is! That's a good boy, Atty."

"Oh, mammy darlin," exclaimed the child, on seeing the blood streaming from her temple—"mammy darlin', what happened you?"

"I fell, Atty, dear," she replied, "and was cut."

"That's a lie, Atty; it was I, your fine chip of a father, that struck her. Here's her health, at all events. I'll make one dhrink of it. Hoch! they may talk as they like, but I'll stick to Captain Whiskey."

"Father," said the child, "will you come over and lie down upon the straw, for *your own me*, for *your own Atty*; and then you'll fall into a sound sleep?"

"I will, Atty, for *you*—for *you*—I will, Atty;

but mind, I wouldn't do it for e'er another livin'."

One day wid Captain Whiskey I wrastled a fall,
But, faix, I was no match for the Captain at all,
Though the landlady's measures they wor damnably
small—

But I'll thry him to-morrow when I'm sober."

"Come," said the child, "lie down here on the straw. My poor mammy says we'll get clane straw to-morrow; and we'll be grand then."

His father, who was now getting nearly helpless, went over and threw himself upon some straw—thin, and scanty, and cold it was—or rather, in stooping to throw himself on it, he fell with what they call in the country a *sozz*; that is, he fell down in a state of utter helplessness—his joints feeble and weak, and all his strength utterly prostrated. Margaret, who in the meantime was striving to stop the effusion of blood from her temple by the application of cobwebs, of which there was no scarcity in the house, now went over, and, loosening his cravat, she got together some old rags, of which she formed, as well as she could, a pillow to support his head, in order to avoid the danger of his being suffocated.

"Poor Art," she exclaimed, "if you knew what you did, you would cut that hand off you sooner than raise it to your own Margaret, as you used to call me. It is pity that I feel for you, Art,

dear, but no anger ; an' God, who sees my heart, knows that."

Now that he was settled, and her own temple bound up, the children once more commenced their cry of famine ; for nothing can suspend the stern cravings of hunger, especially when fanged by the bitter consciousness that there is no food to be had. Just then, however, the girl returned from her sister's, loaded with oatmeal—a circumstance which changed the cry of famine into one of joy.

But now what was to be done for fire ? there was none in the house.

"Here is half-a-crown," said the girl, "that she sent you ; but she put her hands across, and swore by the five crasses that, unless you left Art at wanst, they'd never give you a rap farden's worth of assistance agin, if you and they wor to die in the streets."

"Leave him !" said Margaret ! "oh, never ! When I took him, I took him for betther an' for worse, and I'm not goin' to neglect my duty to him now, because he's down. All the world has deserted him, but I'll never desert him. Whatever may happen, Art, dear—poor, lost Art—whatever may happen, I'll live with you, beg with you, die with you—any thing but desert you."

She then, after wiping away the tears which accompanied her words, sent out the girl, who bought some turf and milk, in order to pro-

vide a meal of wholesome food for the craving children.

"Now," said she to the girl, "what is to be done? For if poor Art sees this meal in the morning, he will sell the best part of it to get whiskey; for I need scarcely tell you," she added, striving to palliate his conduct, "that he cannot do without it, however he might contrive to do without his breakfast."

But, indeed, this was true. So thoroughly was he steeped in drunkenness—in the low, frequent, and insatiable appetite for whiskey—that, like tobacco or snuff, it became an essential portion of his life—a necessary evil, without which he could scarcely exist. At all events the poor children had one comfortable meal, which made them happy; the little stock that remained was stowed away in some nook or other, where Art was not likely to find it. The girl went home, and we were about to say that the rest of this miserable family went to bed; but, alas! they had no bed to go to, with the exception of a little straw, and a thin single blanket to cover them.

If Margaret's conduct during these severe and terrible trials was not noble and heroic, we know not what could be called so. The affection which she exhibited towards her husband overcame everything. When Art had got about half way in his mad and profligate career, her friends offered to support her if she would take refuge

with them and abandon him ; but the admirable woman received the proposal as an insult ; and the reply she gave is much the same as the reader has heard from her lips, with reference to the girl's message from her sister.

Subsequently they offered to take her and the children ; but this also she indignantly rejected. She could not leave him, she said, at the very time when it was so necessary that her hands should be about him. What might be the fate of such a man if he had none to take care of him ? No, this almost unexampled woman, rather than desert him in such circumstances, voluntarily partook in all the wretchedness, destitution, and incredible misery which his conduct inflicted on her, and did so patiently, and without a murmur.

In a few days after the night we have described, a man covered with rags, without shoe, or stocking, or shirt, having on an old hat, through the broken crown of which his hair, wefted with bits of straw, stood out, his face shrunk and pale, his beard long and filthy, and his eyes rayless and stupid—a man of this description, we say, with one child in his arms, and two more accompanying him, might be seen begging through the streets of Ballykeerin ; yes, and often in such a state of drunkenness as made it frightful to witness his staggering gait, lest he might tumble over upon the infant, or let it fall out of his arms. This man was

Art Maguire ; to such a destiny had he come, or rather had he brought himself at last ; Art Maguire—one of the great Maguires of Fer-managh !

But where is she—the attached, the indomitable in love—the patient, the much-enduring, the uncomplaining ? Alas ! she is at length separated from him and them ; her throbbing veins are hot and rife with fever—her aching head is filled with images of despair and horror—she is calling for her husband—her young and manly husband—and says she will not be parted from him—she is also calling for her children, and demands to have them. The love of the mother and of the wife is now furious ; but, thank God, the fury that stimulates it is that of disease, and not of insanity. The trials and privations which could not overcome her noble heart, overcame her physical frame ; and on the day succeeding that woful night she was seized with a heavy fever, and through the interference of some respectable inhabitants of the town, was conveyed to the fever hospital, where she now lies in a state of delirium.

And Frank Maguire—the firm, the industrious, and independent—where is he ? Unable to bear the shame of his brother's degradation, he gave up his partnership, and went to America, where he now is ; but not without having left in the hands of a friend something for his unfortunate brother to remember him by ; and it was this

timely aid which for the last three quarters of a year has been the sole means of keeping life in his brother's family.

Thus have we followed Art Maguire from his youth up to the present stage of his life, attempting, as well as we could, to lay open to our readers his good principles and his bad, together with the errors and ignorances of those who had the first formation of his character—we mean his parents and family. We have endeavoured to trace, with as strict an adherence to truth and nature as possible, the first struggles of a heart naturally generous and good, with the evil habit which beset him, as well as with the weaknesses by which that habit was set to work upon his temperament. Whether we have done this so clearly and naturally as to bring home conviction of its truth to such of our readers as may resemble him in the materials which formed his moral constitution, and consequently to hold him up as an example to be avoided, it is not for ourselves to say. If our readers think so, or rather feel so, then we shall rest satisfied of having performed our task as we ought.

Our task, however, is not accomplished. It is true we have accompanied him with pain and pity to penury, rags, and beggary—unreformed, unrepenting, hardened, shameless, desperate. Do our readers now suppose that there is anything in the man, or any principle external to him, capable

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of regenerating and elevating a heart so utterly lost as his ?”

But hush ! what is this ? How dark the moral clouds that have been hanging over the country for a period far beyond the memory of man ! how black that dismal canopy which is only lit by fires that carry and shed around them disease, famine, crime, madness, bloodshed, and death. How hot, sultry, and enervating to the whole constitution of man, physically, and mentally, is the atmosphere we have been breathing so long ! The miasma of the swamp, the simoom of the desert, the merciless sirocco are healthful when compared to such an atmosphere. And, hark ! what formidable being is that, who, with black expanded wings, flies about from place to place, and from person to person, with a cup of fire in his hands, which he applies to their eager lips ? And what spell or charm lies in that burning cup, which, no sooner do they taste than they shout, clap their hands with exultation, and cry out, “we are happy ! we are happy !” Hark ! he proclaims himself, and shouteth still louder than they do ; but they stop their ears, and will not listen ; they shut their eyes and will not see. What sayeth he ? “I am the Angel of Intemperance, Discord, and Destruction, who oppose myself to God and all his laws—to man, and all that has been made for his good ; my delight is in misery and unhappiness, in crime, desolation,

ruin, murder, and death in a thousand shapes of vice and destitution. Such I am, such I shall be, for behold my dominion shall last for ever !”

But hush again ! look towards the south ! what faint but beautiful light is it, which, fairer than that of the morning, gradually breaketh upon that dark sky ! See how gently, but how steadily its lustre enlarges and expands ! It is not the light of the sun, nor of the moon, nor of the stars, neither is it the morning twilight, which heralds the approach of day ; no, but it is the serene effulgence which precedes and accompanies a messenger from God, who is sent to bear a new principle of happiness to man ! This principle is itself an angelic spirit, and lo ! how the sky brightens, and the darkness flees away like a guilty thing before it ! Behold it on the verge of the horizon, which is now glowing with the rosy hues of heaven—it advances, it proclaims its mission :—hark !

“ I am the Angel of Temperance, of Industry, of Peace ! who oppose myself to the Spirit of Evil and all his laws—I am the friend of man, and conduct him to the true enjoyment of all that has been made for his good. My mission is to banish misery, unhappiness, and crime, to save mankind from desolation, ruin, murder, and death, in a thousand shapes of vice and destitution.”

And now see how he advances in beauty and power, attended by knowledge, health and truth, whilst the harmonies of domestic life, of civil concord, and social duty, accompany him, and make

music in his path. But where is the angel of intemperance, discord, and destruction? Hideous monster, behold him! no longer great nor terrible, he flies, or rather, totters, from before his serene opponent—he shudders—he stutters and hiccups in his howlings—his limbs are tremulous—his hands shake as if with palsy—his eye is lustreless and bloodshot, and his ghastly countenance the exponent of death. He flies, but not unaccompanied; along with him are crime, poverty, hunger, idleness; his music the groan of the murderer, the clanking of the madman's chain, filled up by the report of the suicide's pistol, and the horrible yell of despair! And now he and his evil spirits are gone, the moral atmosphere is bright and unclouded, and the Angel of Temperance, Industry, and Peace goes abroad throughout the land, fulfilling his beneficent mission, and diffusing his own virtues into the hearts of a regenerated people!

Leaving allegory, however, to the poets, it is impossible that, treating of the subject which we have selected, we could, without seeming to undervalue it, neglect to say a few words upon the most extraordinary moral phenomenon, which, apart from the miraculous, the world ever saw; we allude to the wonderful Temperance Movement, as it is called, which, under the guiding hand of the Almighty, owes its visible power and progress to the zeal, and incredible exertions of one pious and humble man—the Very Rev. Theo-

bald Mathew, of Cork. When we consider the general, the proverbial character, which our countrymen have, during centuries, borne for love of drink, and their undeniable habits of intemperance, we cannot but feel that the change which has taken place is, indeed, surprising, to say the least of it. But in addition to this, when we also consider the natural temperament of the Irishman—his social disposition—his wit, his humour, and his affection—all of which are lit up by liquor—when we just reflect upon the exhilaration of spirits produced by it—when we think upon the poverty, the distress, and the misery which too generally constitute his wretched lot, and which it will enable him, for a moment, to forget—and when we remember that all his bargains were made over it—that he courted his sweetheart over it—got married over it—wept for his dead over it—and generally fought his enemy of another faction, or the Orangeman of another creed, when under its influence;—when we pause over all these considerations, we can see how many temptations our countrymen had to overcome in renouncing it as they did; and we cannot help looking at it, as a moral miracle, utterly without parallel in the history of man.

Now we are willing to give all possible credit, and praise, and honour to Father Mathew; but we do not hesitate to say, that even he would have failed in being, as he is, the great visible exponent of this admirable principle, unless there

had been other kindred principles in the Irishman's heart, which recognized and clung to it. In other words, it is unquestionable, that had the religious and moral feelings of the Irish people been neglected, the principle of temperance would never have taken such deep root in the heart of the nation as it has done. Nay, it *could* not ; for does not every man of common sense know, that good moral principles seldom grow in a bad moral soil, until it is cultivated for their reception. It is, therefore, certainly a proof that the Roman Catholic priesthood of Ireland had not neglected the religious principles of the people. It may, I know, and it has been called a superstitious contagion ; but however that may be, so long as we have such contagions among us, we will readily pardon the superstition. Let superstition always assume a shape of such beneficence and virtue to man, and we shall not quarrel with her for retaining the name. Such a contagion could never be found among any people in whom there did not exist predisposing qualities, ready to embrace and nurture the good which came with it.

Our argument, we know, may be met by saying that its chief influence was exerted on those whose habits of dissipation, immorality, and irreligion kept them aloof from the religious instruction of the priest. But to those who know the Irish heart, it is not necessary to say that many a man addicted to drink is far from being free

from the impressions of religion, or uninfluenced by many a generous and noble virtue. Neither does it follow that every such man has been neglected by his priest, or left unadmonished of the consequences which attend his evil habit. But how did it happen, according to that argument, that it was this very class of persons—the habitual, or the frequent, or the occasional drunkard—that *first* welcomed the spirit of temperance, and availed themselves of its blessings? If there had not been the buried seeds of neglected instruction lying in their hearts, it is very improbable that they would have welcomed and embraced the principle as they did. On the other hand, it is much more likely that they would have fled from, and avoided a spirit which deprived them of the gratification of their ruling and darling passion. Evil and good, we know, do not so readily associate.

Be this, however, as it may, we have only to state, in continuation of our narrative, that at the period of Art Maguire's most lamentable degradation, and whilst his admirable but unhappy wife was stretched upon the burning bed of fever, the far low sounds of the Temperance Movement were heard, and the pale but pure dawn of its distant light seen at Ballykeerin. That a singular and novel spirit accompanied it, is certain; and that it went about touching and healing with all the power of an angel, is a matter not of history, but of direct knowledge and im-

mediate recollection. Nothing, indeed, was ever witnessed in any country similar to it. Wherever it went, joy, acclamation, ecstasy accompanied it ; together with a sense of moral liberty, of perfect freedom from the restraint, as it were, of some familiar devil, that had kept its victims in its damnable bondage. Those who had sunk exhausted before the terrible Moloch of Intemperance, and given themselves over for lost, could now perceive that there was an ally at hand that was able to bring them succour, and drag them back from degradation and despair, to peace and independence—from contempt and infamy, to respect and praise. Nor was this all. It was not merely into the heart of the sot and drunkard that it carried a refreshing consciousness of joy and deliverance, but into all those hearts which his criminal indulgence had filled with heaviness and sorrow. It had, to be sure, its dark side to some—ay, to thousands. Those who lived by the vices—the low indulgences and the ruinous excesses—of their fellow-creatures—trembled and became aghast at its approach. The vulgar and dishonest publican, who sold a *bona fide* poison under a false name ; the low tavern-keeper ; the proprietor of the dram-shop, of the night-house, and the shebeen—all were struck with terror and dismay. Their occupation was doomed to go. No more in the dishonest avarice of gain were they to coax and jest with the foolish tradesman, until they confirmed him in the depraved

habit, and led him on, at his own expense, and their profit, step by step, until the naked and shivering sot, now utterly ruined, was kicked out, like Art Maguire, to make room for those who were to tread in his steps, and to share his fate.

No more was the purity and inexperience of youth to be corrupted by evil society, artfully introduced for the sordid purpose of making him spend his money, at the expense of health, honesty, and good name.

No more was the decent wife of the spendthrift tradesman, when forced by stern necessity, and the cries of her children, to seek her husband in the public-house of a Saturday night, anxious as she was to secure what was left unspent of his week's wages, in order to procure to-morrow's food—no more was she to be wheedled into the bar, to get the landlord's or the landlady's treat, in order that the outworks of temperance, and the principles of industry, perhaps of virtue, might be gradually broken down, for the selfish and diabolical purpose of enabling her drunken husband to spend a double share of his hardly-earned pittance.

No more was the male servant, in whom every confidence was placed, to be lured into these vile dens of infamy, that he might be fleeced of his money, tutored into debauchery or dishonesty, or thrown into the society of thieves and robbers, that he might become an accomplice in their

crimes, and enable them to rob his employer with safety. No more was the female servant, on the other hand, to be made familiar with tippling, or corrupted by evil company, until she became a worthless and degraded creature, driven out of society, without reputation or means of subsistence, and forced to sink to that last loathsome alternative of profligacy which sends her, after a short and wicked course, to the jeering experiments of the dissecting-room.

Oh, no. Those wretches who lived by depravity, debauchery, and corruption, were alarmed almost into distraction by the approach of temperance, for they knew it would cut off the sources of their iniquitous gains, and strip them of the vile means of propagating dishonesty and vice by which they lived. But even this wretched class were not without instances of great disinterestedness and virtue. Several of them closed their debasing establishments, forfeited their ill-gotten means of living, and, trusting to honesty and legitimate industry, voluntarily assumed the badge of temperance, and joined its peaceful and triumphant standard !

Previous to this time, however, and, indeed, long before the joyful sounds of its advancing motion were heard from afar, it is not to be taken for granted that the drunkards of the parish of Ballykeerin were left to the headlong impulses of their own evil propensities. Before Art Maguire had fallen from his integrity and good

name, there had not been a more regular attendant at mass, or at his Easter and Christmas duties, in the whole parish ; in this respect he was a pattern, as Father Costelloe, the priest, often said, to all who were anxious to lead a decent and creditable life, forgetting their duty neither to God nor man. A consciousness of his fall, however, made him ashamed in the beginning to appear at mass, until he should decidedly reform, which he proposed and resolved to do, or thought he resolved, from week to week, and from day to day. How he wrought out these resolutions our readers know too well ; every day and every week only made him worse and worse, until by degrees all thought of God, or prayer, or priest, abandoned him, and he was left to swelter in misery among the very dregs of his prevailing vice, hardened and obdurate. Many an admonition has he received from Father Costelloe, especially before he became hopeless ; and many a time, when acknowledging his own inability to follow up his purposes of amendment, has he been told by that good and Christian man, that he must have recourse to better and higher means of support, and remember that God will not withhold his grace from those who ask it sincerely and aright. Art, however, could not do so ; for although he had transient awakenings of conscience, that were acute whilst they lasted, yet he could not look up to God with a thorough and heartfelt resolution of permanent reformation. The love

of liquor, and the disinclination to give it up, still lurked in his heart, and prevented him from setting about his amendment in earnest. If they had not, he would have taken a second oath, as his brother Frank often advised him to do, but without effect. He still hoped to be able to practise moderation, and drink within bounds, and consequently persuaded himself that total abstinence was not necessary in his case. At length Father Costelloe, like all those who were deeply anxious for his reformation, was looked upon as an unwelcome adviser, whose Christian exhortations to a better course of life, were any thing but agreeable, because he spoke truth ; and so strong did this feeling grow in him, that in his worst moments he would rather sink into the earth than meet him—nay, a glimpse of him at any distance was sure to make the unfortunate man hide himself in some hole or corner until the other had passed, and all danger of coming under his reproof was over.

Art was still begging with his children, when, after a long and dangerous illness, it pleased God to restore his wife to him and them. So much pity, and interest, and respect did she excite during her convalescence—for it was impossible that her virtues, even in the lowest depths of her misery, could be altogether unknown—that the heads of the hospital humanely proposed to give her some kind of situation in it, as soon as she should regain sufficient strength to undertake its

duties. The mother's love, however, still prompted her to rejoin her children, feeling as she did, and as she said, how doubly necessary now her care and attention to them must be. She at length yielded to their remonstrances, when they assured her that to return in her present weak condition to her cold and desolate house, and the utter want of all comfort which was to be found in it, might, and in all probability would, be fatal to her; and that by thus exposing herself too soon to the consequences of cold and destitution she might leave her children motherless. This argument prevailed, but in the mean time she stipulated that her children and her husband, if the latter were in a state of sufficient sobriety, should be permitted occasionally to see her, that she might inquire into their situation, and know how they lived. This was acceded to, and, by the aid of care and nourishing food, she soon found herself beginning to regain her strength.

In the mean time the Temperance movement was rapidly and triumphantly approaching. In a town about fifteen miles distant there was a meeting advertised to be held, at which the great apostle himself was to administer the pledge. Father Costelloe announced it from the altar, and earnestly recommended his parishioners to attend, and enrol themselves under the blessed banner of Temperance, the sober man as well as the drunkard.

"It may be said," he observed, "that sober

men have no necessity for taking the pledge ; and if one were certain that every sober man was to remain sober during his whole life, there would not indeed be a necessity for sober men to take it ; but, alas ! my friends, you know how subject we are to those snares, and pitfalls, and temptations of life by which our paths are continually beset. Who can say to-day that he may not transgress the bounds of temperance before this day week ? Your condition in life is surrounded by inducements to drink. You scarcely buy or sell a domestic animal in fair or market that you are not tempted to drink—you cannot attend a neighbour's funeral that you are not tempted to drink—'tis the same at the wedding and the christening, and in almost all the transactions of your lives. How, then, can you answer for yourselves, especially when your spirits may happen to be elevated, and your hearts glad ? Oh ! it is then, my friends, that the tempter approaches you, and probably implants in your unguarded hearts the germ of that accursed habit which has destroyed millions. How often have you heard it said of many men, even within the range of your own knowledge, ' Ah, he was an industrious, well-conducted, and respectable man—*until he took to drink* ?' Does not the prevalence of such a vile habit, and the fact that so many sober men fall away from that virtue, render the words that I have just uttered a melancholy proverb in the country ? ' Ah, there he

is—in rags and misery ; yet he was an industrious, well-conducted, and respectable man once—that is, *before he took to drink* !” Prevention, my dear friends, is always better than cure ; and in binding yourselves by this most salutary obligation, you know not how much calamity and suffering—how much general misery—how much disgrace and crime you may avoid. And, besides, are we not to look beyond *this* world ? Is a crime which so greatly depraves the heart, and deadens its power of receiving the wholesome impressions of religion and truth, not one which involves our future happiness or misery ? Ah, my dear brethren, it is indeed a great and a gross popular error to say that sober men should not take this pledge. I hope I have satisfied you that it is a duty they owe themselves to take it, so long as they feel that they are frail creatures, and liable to sin and error ; and not only themselves, but their children, their friends, and all who might be affected, either for better or worse, by their example.

“ There is another argument, however, which I cannot overlook, while dwelling upon this important subject. We know that the drunkard, if God should, through the instrumentality of this great and glorious movement, put the wish for amendment into his heart, still feels checked and deterred by a sense of shame ; because, the truth is, if none attended those meetings but such men, that very fact alone would prove a great obstruction in the way of their reformation. Many, too

many, are drunkards, but every man is not an open drunkard, and hundreds, nay thousands, would say, 'by attending these meetings of drunken men, I acknowledge myself to be a drunkard also;' hence they will probably decline going through shame, and consequently miss the opportunity of retrieving themselves. Now, I say, my friends, it is the duty of sober men to deprive them of this argument, and by an act, which, after all, involves nothing of self-denial, but still an act of great generosity, to enable them to enter into this wholesome obligation, without being openly exposed to the consequences of having acknowledged that they were intemperate."

He then announced the time and place of the meeting, which was in the neighbouring town of Drumnabrogue, and concluded by again exhorting them all, without distinction, to attend it, and take the pledge. His exhortations were not without effect; many of his parishioners did attend, and, among them, some of Art's former dissolute companions.

Art himself when spoken to, and pressed to go, hiccuped and laughed at the notion of any such pledge reforming *him*; a strong proof that all hope of recovering himself, or of regaining his freedom from the devil of drunkenness, had long deserted him. This, if anything further was necessary to do so, completed the scene of his moral prostration and infamy. Margaret, who was still in the hospital, now sought to avail her-

self of the opportunity which presented itself, by reasoning with, and urging him to go ; but, like all others, her arguments were laughed at, and Art expressed contempt for her, Father Matthew, and all the meetings that had yet taken place.

"Will takin' the pledge," he asked her, "put a shirt to my back, a thing I almost forget the use of, or a good coat? Will it put a dacent house over my head, a good bed under me, and a warm pair of blankets on us, to keep us from shiverin', an' coughin', an' barkin' the whole night long in the cold? No, faith, I'll not give up the whiskey, for it has one comfort, it makes me sleep in defiance o' wind and weather ; it's the only friend I have left now—it's my shirt—it's my coat—my shoes and stockins—my house—my blankets—my coach—my carriage—it makes me a nobleman, a lord ; but, any how, sure I'm as good, ay, by the mortual, and better ; for amn't I one of the great Maguires of Fermanagh ! Whish, the ou—ould blood for ever, and to the divil wid their meetins !"

"Art," said his wife, "I believe if you took the pledge that it would give you all you say, and more : for it would bring you back the respect and good will of the people that you've long lost."

"To the divil wid the people ! I'll tell you what, if takin' the pledge reforms Mechil Cam, the crooked disciple that he is, or Tom Whiskey,

mind—mind me—I say if it reforms *them*, or young Barny Scaddhan, thin you may spake up for it, an' may be I'll listen to you."

At length the meeting took place, and the three men alluded to by Art, attended it, as they said they would ; each returned home with his pledge ; they rose up the next morning, and on that night went to bed sober. This was repeated day after day, week after week, month after month, and still nothing characterized them but sobriety, peace, and industry.

Unfortunately, so far as Art Maguire was concerned, it was out of his power, as it was out of that of hundreds, to derive any benefit from the example which some of his old hard-drinking associates had so unexpectedly set both him and them. No meeting had since occurred within seventy or eighty miles of Ballykeerin, and yet the contagion of good example had spread through that and the adjoining parishes in a manner that was without precedent. In fact, the people murmured, became impatient, and, ere long, demanded from their respective pastors that another meeting should be held, to afford them an opportunity of publicly receiving the pledge ; and for that purpose they besought the Rev. gentlemen to ask Father Mathew to visit Ballykeerin. This wish was complied with, and Father Mathew consented, though at considerable inconvenience to himself, and appointed a day for the purpose specified. This was about three or four months

after the meeting that was held in the neighbouring town already alluded to.

For the last six weeks Margaret had been able to discharge the duties of an humble situation in the hospital, on the condition that she should at least once a day see her children. Poor as was the situation in question, it enabled her to contribute much more to their comfort than she could if she had resided with them, or, in other words, begged with them ; for to that, had she returned home, it must have come ; and as the winter was excessively severe, this would have killed her, enfeebled as she had been by a long and oppressive fever. Her own good sense taught her to see this, and the destitution of her children and husband, to feel it. In this condition then were they—depending on the scanty aid which her poor exertions could afford them, eked out by the miserable pittance that he extorted as a beggar—when the intelligence arrived that the great Apostle of Temperance had appointed a day on which to hold a teetotal meeting in the town of Ballykeerin.

It is utterly unaccountable how the approach of Father Mathew, and of these great meetings, stirred society into a state of such extraordinary activity, not only in behalf of temperance, but also of many other virtues ; so true is it, that when one healthy association is struck, it awakens all those that are kindred to it into new life. In addition to a love of sobriety, the people felt their

hearts touched, as it were, by a new spirit, into kindness and charity, and a disposition to discharge promptly and with good-will all brotherly and neighbourly offices. Harmony, therefore, civil, social, and domestic, accompanied the temperance movement wherever it went, and accompanies it still wherever it goes ; for like every true blessing, it never comes alone, but brings several others in its train.

The morning in question, though cold, was dry and bright ; a small platform had been raised at the edge of the market-house, which was open on one side, and on it Father Mathew was to stand. By this simple means he would be protected from rain, should any fall, and was sufficiently accessible to prevent any extraordinary crush among the postulants. But how will we attempt to describe the appearance which the town of Ballykeerin presented on the morning of this memorable and auspicious day ? And above all, in what terms shall we paint the surprise, the wonder, the astonishment with which they listened to the music of the teetotal band, which, as if by magic, had been formed in the town of Drumnabogue, where, only a few months before, the meeting of which we have spoken had been held. Indeed, among all the proofs of national advantages which the temperance movement has brought out, we are not to forget those which it has bestowed on the country—by teaching us what a wonderful capacity for music, and what a

remarkable degree of intellectual power the lower classes of our countrymen are endowed with, and can manifest when moved by adequate principles.

Early as day-break the roads leading to Ballykeerin presented a living stream of people hastening onwards towards the great rendezvous; but so much did they differ in their aspect from almost any other assemblage of Irishmen, that, to a person ignorant of their purpose, it would be difficult, if not impossible, to guess the cause, not that moved them in such multitudes towards the same direction, but that marked them by such peculiar characteristics. We have seen Irishmen and Irishwomen going to a country race in the summer months, when labour there was none; we have seen them going to meetings of festivity and amusement of all descriptions;—to fairs, to weddings, to dances—but we must confess, that notwithstanding all our experience and intercourse with them, we never witnessed anything at all resembling their manner and bearing on this occasion. There was undoubtedly upon them, and among them, all the delightful enjoyment of a festival spirit; they were easy, cheerful, agreeable, and social; but, in addition to this, there was clearly visible an expression of feeling that was new even to themselves, as well as to the spectators. But how shall we characterize this feeling? It was certainly not at variance with the cheerfulness which they felt, but, at the same time, it shed over it a serene solemnity of man-

ner which communicated a moral grandeur to the whole proceeding that fell little short of sublimity. This was a principle of simple virtue upon which all were equal ; but it was more than that, it was at once a manifestation of humility, and an exertion of faith, in the aid and support of the Almighty, by whose grace those earnest but humble people felt and trusted that they would be supported. And who can say that their simplicity of heart—their unaffected humility, and their firmness of faith have not been amply rewarded, and triumphantly confirmed by the steadfastness with which they have been, with extremely few exceptions, faithful to their pledge.

About nine o'clock the town of Ballykeerin was crowded with a multitude such as had never certainly met in it before. All, from the rustic middle classes down, were there. The crowd was, indeed, immense, yet, notwithstanding their numbers, one could easily mark the peculiar class for whose sake principally the meeting had been called together.

There was the red-faced farmer of substance, whose sun-burnt cheeks, and red side neck, were scorched into a colour that disputed its healthy hue with the deeper purple tint of strong and abundant drink.

“ Such a man,” an acute observer would say, “ eats well, and drinks well, but is very likely to pop off some day, without a minute’s warning, or saying good bye to his friends.”

Again, there was the pale and emaciated drunkard, whose feeble and tottering gait, and trembling hands, were sufficiently indicative of his broken down constitution, and probably of his anxiety to be enabled to make some compensation to the world, or some provision on the part of his own soul, to balance the consequences of an ill-spent life, during which morals were laughed at, and health destroyed.

There was also the healthy-looking drunkard of small means, who, had he been in circumstances to do so, would have gone to bed drunk every night in the year. He is not able, from the narrowness of his circumstances, to drink himself into apoplexy on the one hand, or debility on the other; but he is able, notwithstanding, to drink the clothes off his back, and the consequence is, that he stands before you as ragged, able-bodied, and thumping a specimen of ebriety as you could wish to see during a week's journey. There were, in fact, the vestiges of drunkenness in all their repulsive features, and unhealthy variety.

There stood the grog-drinker with his blotched face in full flower, his eye glazed in his head, and his protuberant paunch projecting over his shrunk and diminished limbs.

The tippling tradesman too was there, pale and sickly-looking, his thin and over-worn garments evidently insufficient to keep out the chill of morning, and prevent him from shivering every now and then, as if he were afflicted with the ague.

In another direction might be seen the servant out of place, known by the natty knot of his white cravat as well as by the smartness with which he wears his dress, buttoned up as it is, and coaxed about him with all the ingenuity which experience and necessity bring to the aid of vanity.—His napless hat is severely brushed, in order to give the subsoil an appearance of the nap which is gone, but it wont do ; every one sees that his intention is excellent, were it possible for address and industry to work it out. This is not the case, however, and the hat is consequently a clear exponent of his principles and position, taste and skill while he was sober—vain pride and trying poverty now in his drunkenness.

The reckless looking sailor was also there, (but with a serious air now,) who having been discharged for drunkenness, and refused employment everywhere else for the same reason, was obliged to return home, and remain a burthen upon his friends. He, too, has caught this healthy epidemic, and the consequence is, that he will once more gain employment ; for the production of his medal will be accepted as a welcome proof of his reformation.

And there was there, what was better still, the unfortunate female, the victim of passion and profligacy, conscious of her past life, and almost ashamed in the open day to look around her. Poor thing ! how her heart that was once innocent and pure now trembles within a bosom where

there is awakened many a painful recollection of early youth, and the happiness of home, before that unfortunate night, when, thrown off her guard by accursed liquor, she ceased to rank among the pure and virtuous. Yes, all these, and a much greater variety, were here, actuated by the noble resolution to abandon for ever the evil courses, the vices, and the profligacy into which they were first driven by the effects of drink.

The crowd was, indeed, immense, many having come a distance of twenty, thirty, some forty, and not a few fifty miles, in order to free themselves by this simple process from the influence of the destructive habit which either was leading, or had led them, to ruin. Of course, it is not to be supposed that among such a vast multitude of people there were not, as there always is, a great number of those vagabond impostors who go about from place to place, for the purpose of extorting charity from the simple and credulous, especially when under the influence of liquor. All this class hated the temperance movement, because they knew right well that sobriety in the people was their greatest enemy; the lame, the blind, the maimed, the deaf, and the dumb, were there in strong muster, and with their characteristic ingenuity did everything in their power, under the pretence of zeal and religious enthusiasm, to throw discredit upon the whole proceedings. It was this vile crew, who, by having recourse to the

aid of mock miracles, fancied they could turn the matter into derision and contempt, and who by affecting to be cured of their complaints with a view of having their own imposture, when detected, imputed to want of power in Father Mathew ;—it was this vile crew, we say, that first circulated the notion that he could perform miracles. Unfortunately, many of the ignorant among the people did in the beginning believe that he possessed this power, until he himself with his characteristic candour disclaimed it. For a short time the idea of this slightly injured the cause, and afforded to its enemies some silly and senseless arguments, which, in lieu of better, they were glad to bring against it.

At length Father Mathew, accompanied by several other clergymen and gentlemen, made his appearance on the platform ; then was the rush, the stretching of necks, and the bitter crushing, accompanied by devices and manœuvres of all kinds, to catch a glimpse of him. The windows were crowded by the more respectable classes, who were eager to witness the effects of this great and sober enthusiasm among the lower classes. The proceedings, however, were very simple. He first addressed them in a plain and appropriate discourse, admirably displaying the very description of eloquence which was best adapted to his auditory. This being concluded, he commenced administering the pledge, the postulants repeating the following words :—“ I pro-

mise, so long as I shall continue a member of the Teetotal Temperance Society, to abstain from all intoxicating liquors, unless recommended for medical purposes, and to discourage by all means in my power the practice of intoxication in others." Father Mathew then said, "May God bless you, and enable you to keep your promise!"

Such was the simple ceremony by which millions have been rescued from those terrible evils that have so long cursed and afflicted society in this country.

In this large concourse there stood one individual, who presented in his person such symptoms of a low, grovelling, and unremitting indulgence in drink, as were strikingly observable even amidst the mass of misery and wretchedness that was there congregated. It is rarely, even in a life, that an object in human shape, encompassed and pervaded by so many of the fearful results of habitual drunkenness, comes beneath observation. Sometimes we may see it in a great city, when we feel puzzled, by the almost total absence of reason in the countenance, to know whether the utter indifference to nakedness and the elements, be the consequence of drunken destitution, or pure idiotcy. To this questionable appearance had the individual we speak of come. The day was now nearly past, and the crowd had considerably diminished, when this man, approaching Father Mathew, knelt down, and clasping his skeleton hands, exclaimed—

" Father, I'm afeared I cannot trust myself."

" Who can ?" said Father Mathew ; " it is not in yourself you are to place confidence, but in God, who will support you, and grant you strength, if you ask for it sincerely and humbly."

These words, uttered in tones of true Christian charity, gave comfort to the doubting heart of the miserable creature, who said—

" I would wish to take the pledge ; but I doubt it's too late—too late for *me* ! O, if I *thought it wasn't* ! "

" It's never too late to repent," replied the other, " or to return from evil to good. If you feel your heart inclined to the right course, let nothing prevent you from pledging yourself to sobriety and temperance."

" In God's name, then, I will take it," he replied ; and immediately repeated the simple words which constitute the necessary form.

" May God bless you," said Father Mathew, placing his hand on his head, " and enable you to keep your promise !"

This man, our readers already guess, was Art Maguire.

Having thus solemnly pledged himself to sobriety, and a total abstinence from all intoxicating liquors, his first feeling was very difficult to describe. Father Mathew's words, though few and brief, had sunk deep into his heart, and penetrated his whole spirit. He had been for many a long day the jest and jibe of all

who knew him; because they looked upon his recovery as a hopeless thing, and spoke to him accordingly in a tone of contempt and scorn—a lesson to us that we never should deal harshly with the miserable. Now, however, he had been addressed in accents of kindness, and in a voice that proclaimed an interest in his welfare. This, as we said, added to the impressive spirit that prevailed around, touched him, and he hurried home.

On reaching his almost empty house, he found Margaret and the children there before him; she having come to see how the poor things fared—but being quite ignorant of what had just taken place with regard to her husband.

“Art,” said she, with her usual affectionate manner; “you will want something to eat; for if you’re not hungry, your looks belie you very much. I have brought something for you and these creatures.”

Art looked at her, then at their children, then at the utter desolation of the house, and spreading his two hands over his face, he wept aloud. This was repentance. Margaret in exceeding surprise, rose and approached him:—

“Art dear,” she said, “in the name of God what’s the matter?”

“May be my father’s sick, mother,” said little Atty; “sure, father, if you are, I an’ the rest will *go out* ourselves, an’ you can stay at home; but

we needn't go this day, for my mammy brought us as much as will put us over it."

To neither the mother nor child did he make any reply ; but wept on and sobbed as if his heart would break.

"Oh my God, my God," he exclaimed bitterly, "what have I brought you to, my darlin' wife and childre, that I loved a thousand times better than my own heart? Oh, what have I brought you to?"

"Art," said his wife, and her eye kindled, "in the name of the heavenly God, is this sorrow for the life you led?"

"Ah, Margaret darlin'," he said, still sobbing ; "it's long since I ought to a felt it ; but how can I look back on that woful life? Oh my God, my God ! what have I done, an' what have I brought on you !"

"Art," she said, "say to me that you're sorry for it ; only let my ears hear you saying *the words*."

"Oh Margaret dear," he sobbed, "from my heart—from the core of my unhappy heart—I am sorry—sorry for it all."

"Then there's hope," she exclaimed, clasping her hands, and looking up to heaven, "there is hope—for him—for *him*—for *us all* ! Oh my heart," she exclaimed quickly, "what is this?" and she had scarcely uttered the words, when she sank upon the ground insensible—sudden joy being sometimes as dangerous as sudden grief.

Art, who now forgot his own sorrow in apprehension for her, raised her up, assisted by little Atty, who, as did the rest of the children, cried bitterly on seeing his mother's eyes shut, her arms hanging lifelessly by her side, and herself without motion. Water, however, was brought by Atty, her face sprinkled, and a little put to her lips, and with difficulty down her throat. At length she gave a long deep-drawn sigh, and, opening her eyes, she looked tenderly into her husband's face—

“ Art dear,” she said in a feeble voice, “ did I hear it right ? And you said *you were sorry* !”

“ From my heart I am, Margaret dear,” he replied ; “ Oh, if you knew what I feel this minute !”

She looked on him again, and her pale face was lit up with a smile of almost ineffable happiness.

“ Kiss me,” said she, “ we are both young yet, Art dear, and we will gain our lost ground wanst more.”

Whilst she spoke, the tears of delight fell in torrents down her cheeks. Art kissed her tenderly, and immediately pulling out the medal, showed it to her.

She took the medal, and after looking at it, and reading the inscription—

“ Well, Art,” she said, “ you never broke your oath—that's one comfort.”

“ No,” he replied, “ nor I'll never break this ;

if I do," he added fervently and impetuously, "*may God mark me out for misery and misfortune !*"

"Whisht, dear," she replied ; "don't give way to these curses—they sarve no purpose, Art. But I'm so happy this day !"

"An' is my father never to be drunk any more, mammy ?" asked the little ones joyfully : "an' he'll never be angry wid you, nor bate you any more ?"

"Whisht darlins'," she exclaimed ; "don't be spakin' about that ; sure your poor father never beat me, only when he didn't know what he was doin'. Never mention it again one of you."

"Ah, Margaret," said Art, now thoroughly awakened, "what recompense can I ever make you for the treatment I gave you ? Oh, how can I think of it, or look back upon it !"

His voice almost failed him, as he uttered the last words ; but his affectionate wife stooped, and, kissing away the tears from his cheeks, said—

"Don't, Art dear ; sure *this now* is not a time to cry ;" and yet her own tears were flowing ; "isn't our love come back to us ? won't we now have peace ? won't we get industrious, and be respected again ?"

"Ah Margaret darling," he replied, "*your* love never left you ; so don't put *yourself* in ; but as for me—oh what have I done ? and what have I brought you to ?

"Well now, thanks be to the Almighty, all's

right. Here's something for you to ait ; you must want it."

"But," he replied, "did these poor crathurs get any thing ? bekase if they didn't, I'll taste nothin' till they do."

"They did indeed," said Margaret ; and all the little ones came joyfully about him, to assure him that they had been fed, and were not hungry.

The first feeling Art now experienced on going abroad was shame—a deep and overwhelming sense of shame ; shame at the meanness of his past conduct—shame at his miserable and unsightly appearance—shame at all he had done, and at all he had left undone. What course now, however, was he to adopt ? Being no longer stupefied and besotted by liquor, into a state partly apathetic, partly drunken, and wholly shameless, he could not bear the notion of resuming his habits of mendicancy. The decent, but not the empty and senseless, pride of his family, was now re-awakened in him, and he felt besides, that labour and occupation were absolutely necessary to enable him to bear up against the incessant craving which he felt for the pernicious stimulant. So strongly did this beset him, that he suffered severely from frequent attacks of tremor and sensations that resembled fits of incipient distraction. Nothing, therefore, remained for him but close employment, that would keep both mind and body engaged.

When the fact of his having taken the pledge became generally known, it excited less astonishment than a person might imagine ; in truth, the astonishment would have been greater had he refused to take it at all, so predominant and full of enthusiasm was the spirit of temperance at that period. One feeling, however, prevailed with respect to him, which was, that privation of his favourite stimulant would kill him—that his physical system, already so much exhausted and enfeebled, would break down—and that poor Art would soon go the way of all drunkards.

On the third evening after he had taken the pledge, he went down to the man who had succeeded himself in his trade, and who, by the way, had been formerly one of his own journeymen, of the very men who, while he was running his career of dissipation, refused to flatter his vanity, or make one in his excesses, and who was moreover one of the individuals whom he had dismissed. To this man he went, and thus accosted him ; his name was Owen Gallagher.

“Owen,” said he, “I trust in God that I have gained a great victory of late.”

The man understood him perfectly well, and replied—

“I hope so, Art ; I hear you have taken the pledge.”

“Relyin’ on God’s help, I have.”

“Well,” replied Owen, “you couldn’t rely on better help.”

"No," said Art, "I know I could not; but Owen, I ran a wild and a terrible race of it—I'm grieved an' shamed to think—even to think of it."

"An' that's a good sign, Art, there couldn't be bettther; for unless a man's heart is sorry for his faults, and ashamed of them too, it's not likely he'll give them over."

"I can't bear to walk the streets," continued Art, "nor to rise my head; but still something must be done for the poor wife and childre."

"Ah, Art," replied Owen, "that is the wife! The goold of Europe isn't value for her, an' that's what every one knows."

"But who knows it, an' feels it as I do?" said Art, "or who has the right either? Howand-iver, as I said, something must be done. Owen, will you venture to give me employment? I know I'm in bad trim to come into a dacent workshop, but you know necessity has no law; it isn't my clo'es that will work but myself; an' indeed, if you do employ me, it's not much I'll be able to do this many a day; but the truth is if I don't get something to keep me busy, I doubt I won't be able to stand against what I feel both in mind and body."

These words were uttered with such an air of deep sorrow and perfect sincerity, as affected Gallagher very much.

"Art," said he, "there was no man so great a gainer by the unfortunate coorse you took as I was, for you know I came into the best part of

your business ; God forbid then that I should refuse you work, especially as you have turned over a new lafe—or to lend you a helpin' hand either, now that I know it will do you and your family good, and won't go to the public-house. Come wid me."

He took down his hat as he spoke, and brought Art up to one of those general shops that are to be found in every country town like Ballykeerin.

" Mr. Trimble," said he, " Art Maguire wants a plain substantial suit o' clothes, that will be chape an' wear well, an' I'll be accountable for them. Art, sir, has taken the pledge, and is goin' to turn over a new lafe, an' be as he wanst was, I hope."

" And there is no man," said the worthy shopkeeper, " in the town of Ballykeerin, that felt more satisfaction than I did when I heard he had taken it. I know what he wants, and what you want for him, and he shall have it both cheap and good."

Such was the respect paid to those who nobly resolved to overcome their besetting sin of drink, and its consequent poverty or profligacy, that the knowledge alone that they had taken the pledge, gained them immediate good will, as it was entitled to do. This, to be sure, was in Art's favour, but there was about him, independently of this, a serious spirit of awakened resolution and sincerity, which carried immediate conviction along with it.

"This little matter," said the honest carpenter, with natural consideration for Art, "will, of course, rest between you and me, Mr. Trimble."

"I understand your feeling, Owen," said he, "and I can't but admire it; it does honour to your heart."

"Hut," said Gallagher, "it's nothin'; sure it's jist what Art would do for myself, if we wor to change places."

Thus it is with the world, and ever will be so till human nature changes. Art had taken the first step towards his reformation, and Owen felt that he was sincere; this step, therefore, even slight as it was, sufficed to satisfy his old friend that he would be safe in aiding him. Gallagher's generosity, however, did not stop here; the assistance which he gave Art, though a matter of secrecy between themselves, was soon visible in Art's appearance, and that of his poor family. But good fortune did not end even here; in about a week after this, when Art was plainly but comfortably dressed, and working with Gallagher, feeble as he was, upon journeyman's wages, there came a letter from his brother Frank, enclosing ten pounds for the use of his wife and children. It was directed to a friend in Ballykeerin, who was instructed to apply it according to his own discretion, and the wants of his family, only by no means to permit a single shilling of it to reach his hands, unless on the condition that he had altogether given up liquor. This seemed to

Art like a proof that God had rewarded him for the step he had taken ; in a few weeks it was wonderful how much comfort he and his family had contrived to get about them. Margaret was a most admirable manager, and a great economist, and with her domestic knowledge and good sense, things went on beyond their hopes.

Art again was up early and down late—for his strength, by the aid of wholesome and regular food, and an easy mind, was fast returning to him—although we must add here that he never regained the healthy and powerful constitution which he had lost. His reputation too was fast returning ; many a friendly salutation he received from those who, in his degradation, would pass him by with either ridicule or solemn contempt.

Nothing in this world teaches a man such well remembered lessons of life as severe experience. Art, although far, very far removed from his former independence, yet, perhaps, might be said never to have enjoyed so much peace of mind, or so strong a sense of comfort as he did now in his humble place with his family. The contrast between his past misery, and the present limited independence which he enjoyed, if it could be called independence, filled his heart with a more vivid feeling of thankfulness than he had ever known. He had now a bed to sleep on, with *bona fide* blankets—he had a chair to sit on—a fire on his hearth—and food, though plain, to eat ; so had his wife, so had his children ; he had also

very passable clothes to his back, that kept him warm and comfortable, and prevented him from shivering like a reed in the blast ; so had his wife, and so had his children. But he had more than this, for he had health, a good conscience, and a returning reputation. People now addressed him as an equal, as a man, as an individual who constituted a portion of society ; then again, he loved his wife as before, and lived with her in a spirit of affection equal to any they had ever felt. Why, this was to a man who suffered what he and his family had suffered, perfect luxury.

In truth, Art now wondered at the life he had led,—he could not understand it ; why he should have suffered himself, for the sake of a vile and questionable enjoyment—if enjoyment that could be called, which was no enjoyment—at least for the sake of a demoralizing and degrading habit, to fall down under the feet as it were, under the evil tongues, and the sneers—of those who constituted *his* world—the inhabitants of Ballykeerin—was now, that he had got rid of the thralldom, perfectly a mystery to him. Be this as it may, since he had regenerated his own character, the world was just as ready to take him up, as it had been to lay him down.

Nothing in life gives a man such an inclination for active industry as to find that he is prospering ; he has then heart and spirits to work, and does work blithely and cheerfully ; so was it with Art. He and his employer were admirably adapted for

each other, both being extremely well tempered, honest, and first-rate workmen. About the expiration of the first twelve months, Art had begun to excite a good deal of interest in the town of Ballykeerin, an interest which was beginning to affect Owen Gallagher himself in a beneficial way. He was now pointed out to strangers as the man, who, almost naked, used to stand drunk and begging upon the bridge of Ballykeerin, surrounded by his starving and equally naked children. In fact, he began to get a name, quite a reputation for the triumph which he had achieved over drunkenness; and on this account Owen Gallagher, when it was generally known in the country that Art worked with him, found his business so rapidly extending, that he was obliged, from time to time, to increase the number of hands in his establishment. Art felt this, and being now aware that his position in life was, in fact, more favourable for industrious exertion than ever, resolved to give up journeywork, and once more, if only for the novelty of the thing, to set up for himself. Owen Gallagher on hearing this from his own lips, said he could not, nor would not blame him, but, he added—

“ I’ll tell you what we can do, Art—come into partnership wid me, for I think as we’re gettin’ an so well together, it ’ud be a pity, almost a sin to part; join me, and I’ll give you one third of the business,”—by which he meant the profits of it.

"Begad," replied Art, laughing, "it's as much for the novelty of the thing I'm doin' it as any thing else ; I think it 'ud be like a dhrame to me, if I was to find myself and my family as we wor before." And so they parted.

It is unnecessary here to repeat what we have already detailed concerning the progress of his early prosperity ; it is sufficient, we trust, to tell our readers that he rose into rapid independence, and that he owed all his success to the victory that he had obtained over himself. His name was now far and near, and so popular had he become, that no teetotaller would employ any other carpenter. This, at length, began to make him proud, and to feel that his having given up drink, instead of being simply a duty to himself and his family, was altogether an act of great voluntary virtue on his part.

"Few men," he said, "would do it, an' may be, afther all, if I hadn't the ould blood in my veins—if I wasn't one of the great Fermanagh Maguires, I would never a' done it."

He was now not only a vehement teetotaler, but an unsparing enemy to all who drank even in moderation ; so much so, indeed, that whenever a man came to get work done with him, the first question he asked him was—"Are you a Tee-totaler ?" If the man answered "No," his reply was, "well, I'm sorry for that, bekase I couldn't wid a safe conscience do your work ; but you can

go to Owen Gallagher, and he will do it for you as well as any man livin'."

This to be sure was the abuse of the principle ; but we all know that the best things may be abused. He was, in fact, outrageous in defence of Teetotalism ; attended all its meetings ; subscribed for Band-money ; and was by far the most active member in the whole town of Ballykeerin. It was not simply that he forgot his former poverty ; he forgot himself. At every procession he was to be seen, mounted on a spanking horse, ridiculously overdressed—the man, we mean, not the horse—flaunting with ribbons, and quite puffed up at the position to which he had raised himself.

This certainly was not the humble and thankful feeling with which he ought to have borne his prosperity. The truth, however, was, that Art in all this parade, was not in the beginning acting upon those broad, open principles of honesty, which, in the transaction of business, had characterised his whole life. He was now influenced by his foibles—by his vanity—and by his ridiculous love of praise. Nor, perhaps, would these have been called into action, were it not through the intervention of his old friend and pot companion, Toal Finigan. Toal, be it known to the reader, the moment he heard that Art had become a Teetotaler, immediately became one himself, and by this means their intimacy was once more renewed ; that is to say, they spoke in friendly terms whenever they met—but no entreaty or

persuasion could ever induce Toal to enter Art's house; and the reader need not be told why. At all events, Toal, soon after he joined it, put himself forward in the Teetotal Movement with such prominence, that Art, who did not wish to be out-done in anything, began to get jealous of him. Hence his ridiculous exhibitions of himself in every manner that could attract notice, or throw little Toal into the shade; and hence also the still more senseless determination not to work for any but a Teetotaler; for in this, too, Toal had set him the example. Toal, the knave, on becoming a Teetotaler, immediately resolved to turn it to account; but Art, provided he could show off, and cut a conspicuous figure in a procession, had no dishonest motive in what he did; and this was the difference between them. For instance, on going up the town of Ballykeerin, you might see over the door of a middle-sized house "Teetotal Meal Shop. N.B.—None but Teetotalers need come here."

Now every one knew Toal too well not to understand this; for the truth is, that, maugre his sign, he never refused his meal or other goods to any one that had money to pay for them.

One evening, about this time, Art was seated in his own parlour—for he now *had* a parlour, and was in a state of prosperity far beyond anything he had ever experienced before—Margaret and the children were with him; and as he smoked his pipe, he could not help making an

observation or two upon the wonderful change which so short a time had brought about.

"Well, Margaret," said he, "isn't this wonderful, dear? Look at the comfort we have now about us, and think of——; but troth I don't like to think of it at all."

"I never can," she replied, "without a troubled and a sinkin' heart; but Art, don't you remember when I wanst wished you to become a Teetotaler, the answer you made me?"

"May be I do; what was it?"

"Why you axed me—and you were makin' game of it at the time—whether Teetotalism would put a shirt or a coat to your back—a house over your head—give you a bed to lie on, or blankets to keep you and the childre from shiverin', an' coughin', an' barkin' in the cold of the night? Don't you remember sayin' this?"

"I think I do. Ay, I remember something about it now. Didn't I say that whiskey was my coach an' my carriage, an' that it made me a lord?"

"You did. Well, *now* what do you say? Hasn't Teetotalism bated you in your own argument? Hasn't it given you a shirt an' a coat to your back, a good bed to lie on, a house over your head? In short, now, Art, hasn't it given you all you said, an' more than ever you expected? eh, now?"

"I give in, Margaret—you have me there ;

but," he proceeded, "it's not every man could pull himself up as I did—eh?"

"Oh, for God's sake, Art, don't begin to put any trust in your own mere strength, nor don't be boasting of what you did, the way you do; sure we ought always to be very humble and thankful to God for what he has done for us;—Is there any thing comes to us only through him?"

"I'm takin' no pride to myself," said Art, "divil a taste; but this I know, talk as you will, there's always somethin' in the ould blood."

"Now, Art," she replied, smiling, "do you know I could answer you on that subject if I liked."

"You could," said Art; "come, then, let us hear your answer—come, now—ha, ha, ha!"

She became grave, but complacent, as she spoke. "Well, then, Art," said she, "where was the ould blood *when you fell so low*? If it was the ould blood that riz you up, remember it was the ould blood that put you down. You drank more whiskey," she added, "upon the head of the ould blood of Ireland, and the Great Fermanagh Maguires, than you did on all other subjects put together. No, Art, dear, let us not trust to ould blood, or young blood, but let us trust to the grace o' God, an' ax it from our hearts out."

"Well, but, arn't we in great comfort now?"

"We are," she replied, "thank the Giver of

all good for it ; may God continue it to us, and grant it to last !”

“Last ! why wouldn’t it last, woman alive ? Well, begad, after all, ’tis not every other man, any way——”

“Whisht, now,” said Margaret, interrupting him, “you’re beginning to praise yourself.”

“Well, I won’t, then. I’m going down the town to have a glass or two o’ cordial wid young Tom Whiskey in Barny Scaddhan’s.”

Art,” she replied, somewhat solemnly, “the very name of Barny Scaddhan sickens me. I know we ought to forgive every one, as we hope to be forgiven ourselves ; but still, Art, if I was in your shoes, the sorra foot ever I’d put inside his door. Think of the way he trated you ; ah, Art, acushla, where’s the pride of the ould blood now ?”

“Hut, woman ! divil a one o’ me ever could keep in bad feelin’ to any one. Troth Barny of late’s as civil a crature as there’s alive. Sure what you spake of was all my own fault, and not his. I’ll be back in an hour or so.”

“Well,” said his wife, “there is one thing, Art, that every one knows.”

“What is that, Margaret ?”

“Why, that a man’s never safe in bad company.”

“But, sure, what harm can they do me, when we drink nothing that can injure us ?”

“Well, then,” said she, “as that’s the case,

can't you as well stay with good company as bad?"

"I'll not be away more than an hour."

"Then, since you *will* go, Art, listen to me. You'll be apt to meet Toal Finigan there: now, as you love me and your childre, an' as you wish to avoid evil and misfortune, don't do any one thing that he proposes to you. I've often tould you that he's your bitterest enemy."

"I know you did; but sure wanst a woman takes a pick (pique) against a man she'll never forgive him. In about an hour, mind."

He then went out.

The fact is, that some few of those who began to feel irksome under the Obligation—by which I mean the knaves and hypocrites—for it is not to be supposed that among such an incredible multitude as joined the movement there were none of this description—some few, I say, were in the habit of resorting to Barny Scaddhan's for the social purpose of taking a glass of the true Teetotal cordial together. This drinking of cordial was most earnestly promoted by the class of low and dishonest publicans whom we have already described; and no wonder that it was so. In the first place, its sale is more profitable than that of whiskey itself; and, in the second place, these fellows know by experience that it is the worst enemy that teetotalism has—very few having ever strongly

addicted themselves to cordial, who do not ultimately break the pledge, and resume the use of intoxicating liquor. This fact was well known at the time; for Father Costelloe, who did every thing that man could do to extend and confirm the principle of temperance, had put his parishioners on their guard against the use of this deleterious trash. Consequently, very few of the Ballykeerin men, either in town or parish, would taste it. When they stood in need of anything to quench their thirst, or nourish them, they confined themselves to water, milk, or coffee. Scarcely any one, therefore, with the exception of the knaves and hypocrites, tampered with themselves by drinking it.

The crew whom Art went to meet on the night in question consisted of about half a dozen, who, when they had been in the habit of drinking whiskey, were hardened and unprincipled men—profligates in every sense—fellows that, like Toal Finigan, now adhered to teetotalism from sordid motives only—or, in other words, because they thought they could improve their business by it. It is true they were suspected and avoided by the honest teetotalers, who wondered very much that Art Maguire, after the treatment he had formerly received at their hands, should be mean enough, they said, ever “to be hail fellow well met” with them again. But Art, alas! in spite of all his dignity of old blood, and his rhodomontade about the Fermanagh Maguires, was utterly deficient

in that decent pride which makes a man respect himself, and prevents him from committing a mean action.

For a considerable time before his arrival, there were assembled in Barny Scaddhan's tap, Tom Whiskey, Jerry Shannon, Jack Mooney, Toal Finigan, and the decoy duck, young Barny Scaddhan himself, who merely became a teetotaler that he might be able to lure his brethren in to spend their money in drinking cordial.

"I wondher Art's not here before now," observed Tom Whiskey. "Blood alive, didn't he get on well afther joinin' the 'totalers?'"

"Faix, it's a miracle," replied Jerry Shannon; "there's not a more 'sponsible man in Bally-keerin. He has quite a Protestant look;—ha, ha, ha!"

"Divil a sich a pest ever this house had as the same Art when he was a blackguard," said young Scaddhan; "there was no keepin' him out of it, but constantly spungin' upon the dacent people that wor dhrinkin' in it."

"Many a good pound and penny he left you, for all that, Barny, my lad," said Mooney; "and purty tratement you gave him when his money was gone."

"Ay, an' we'd give you the same," returned Scaddhan, "if yours was gone too; ha, ha, ha! It's not moneyless vagabones we want here."

"No," said Shannon, "you first *make* them

moneyless vagabones, an' then you kick them out o' doors, as you did him."

"Exactly," said the hardened miscreant; "that's the way we live. When we get the skin off the cat, then we throw out the carcase."

"Why, dang it, man," said Whiskey, "would you expect honest Barney here, or his still honest ould rip of a father, bad as they are, to give us drink for nothing?"

"Now," said Finigan, who had not yet spoken, "yez are talkin' about Art Maguire, and I'll tell yez what I could do; I could bend my finger that way, an' make him folly me over the parish."

"And how could you do that?" asked Whiskey.

"By soodherin' him—by ticklin' his empty pride—by dwellin' on the ould blood of Ireland, the great Fermanagh Maguires—or by tellin' him that he's betther than any one else, and could do what nobody else could."

"Could you make him drunk to-night?" asked Shannon.

"Ay," said Toal, "an' will too, as ever you seen him in your lives; only whin I'm praisin' him do some of you oppose me, an' if I propose anything to be done, do you all either support me in it, or go against me, accordin' as you see he may take it."

"Well then," said Mooney, "in ordher to put you in spirits, go off, Barney, an' slip a glass o'

whiskey a-piece into this cordial, jist to tighten it a bit—ha, ha, ha !”

“ Ay,” said Tom Whiskey, “ till we dhrink success to teetotalism, ha, ha, ha !”

“ Suppose you *do* him in the cordial,” said Shannon.

“ Never mind,” replied Toal ; “ I’ll first soften him a little on the cordial, and then make him tip the punch openly and before faces, like a man.”

“ Troth it’s a sin,” observed Mooney, who began to disrelish the project ; “ if it was only on account of his wife and childre.”

Toal twisted his mis-shapen mouth into still greater deformity at this observation—

“ Well,” said he, “ no matter, it’ll only be a good joke. Art is a dacent fellow, and afther this night we won’t repate it. Maybe,” he continued, “ I may find it necessary to vex him, an’ if I do, remember you won’t let him get at me, or my bread’s baked.”

This they all promised, and the words were scarcely concluded, when Art entered and joined them. As a great portion of their conversation did not bear upon the subject-matter of this narrative, it is therefore unnecessary to record it. After about two hours, during which Art had unconsciously drank, at least, three glasses of whiskey, disguised in cordial, the topic artfully introduced by Toal was the Temperance Movement.

"As for my part," said he, "I'm half ashamed that I ever joined it. As I was never drunk, where was the use of it? Besides, it's an unmanly thing for any one to have it to say that he's not able to keep himself sober, barrin' he takes an oath, or the pledge."

"And why did you take it then?" said Art.

"Bekaise I was a fool," replied Toal; "divil a thing else."

"It's many a good man's case," observed Art, in reply, "to take an oath against liquor, or a pledge either, an' no disparagement to any man that does it."

"He's a betther man that can keep himself sober widout it," said Toal dryly.

"What do you mane by a betther man?" asked Art, somewhat significantly; "let us hear that first, Toal."

"Don't be talkin' about betther men here," said Jerry Shannon; "I tell you, Toal, there's a man in this room, and when you get me a betther man in the town of Ballykeerin, I'll take a glass of punch wid you, or a pair o' them, in spite of all the pledges in Europe."

"An' who is that, Jerry," said Toal.

"There he sits," replied Jerry, putting his extended palm upon Art's shoulder and clapping it.

"May the divil fly away wid you," replied Toal; "did you think me a *manus*, that I'd go to put Art Maguire wid any man that I know? Art Maguire indeed! Now Jerry, my throoper,

do you think I'm come to this time o' day, not to know that there's no man in Ballykeerin, or the parish it stands in—an' that's a bigger word—that could be called a betther man than Art Maguire?"

"Come boys," said Art, "none of your nonsense. Sich as I am, be the same good or bad, I'll stand the next trate, an' devilish fine strong cordial it is."

"Why, then, I don't think myself it's so good," replied young Scaddhan; "troth it's waiker than we usually have it; an' the taste somehow isn't exactly to my plaisin'."

"Very well," said Art; "if you have any that 'ill please yourself betther, get it; but in the mane time bring us a round o' this, an' we'll be satisfied."

"Art Maguire," Toal proceeded, "you were ever and always a man out o' the common coorse."

"Now, Toal, you're beginnin'," said Art; "ha, ha, ha—well, any way, how is that?"

"Bekaise the divil a taste o' fear or terror ever was in your constitution. When Art, boys, was at school—sure he an' I wor schoolfellows—if he took a thing into his head, no matter what, jist out of a whim, he'd do it, if the divil was at the back door, or the whole world goin' to stop him."

"Throth, Toal, I must say there's a great deal o' thruth in that. Divil a one livin' knows

me better than Toal Finigan, sure enough, boys."

"Arra, Art, do you remember the day you crossed the weir, below Tom Booth's," pursued Toal, "when the river was up, and the wather jist intherin' your mouth?"

"That was the day Peggy Booth fainted, when she thought I was gone; begad an' I was near it."

"The very day."

"That may be all thrue enough," observed Tom Whiskey; "still I think I know Art this many a year, and I can't say I ever seen any of these great doins. I jist seen him as aisly put from a thing, and as much afeard of the tongues of the nabours, or of the world, as of another."

"He never cared a damn for either o' them, for all that," returned Toal; "that is, mind, if he tuck a thing into his head; ay, an' I'll go farther—divil a rap ever he cared for them, one way or other. No, the man has no fear of any kind in him."

"Why, Toal," said Mooney, "whether he cares for them or not, I think is aisily decided, and whether he's the great man you make him. Let us hear what he says himself upon it, and *then* we'll know."

"Very well then," replied Toal, "what do you say yourself, Art? Am I right, or am I wrong?"

"You're right, Toal, sure enough; if it went

to that, I don't care a curse about the world, or all Ballykeerin along wid it. I've a good business, and can set the world at defiance. If the people didn't want me, they wouldn't come to me."

"Come, Toal," said Jerry; "here—I'll hould you a pound note"—and he pulled out one as he spoke—"that I'll propose a thing he won't do."

"Aha—thank you for nothing, my customer—I won't take that bait," replied the other; "but listen—is it a thing that he *can* do?"

"It is," replied Jerry; "and what's more, every man in the room can do it, as well as Art, if he wishes."

"He can?"

"He can."

"Here," said Toal, clapping down his pound. "Jack Mooney, put these in your pocket till this matther's decided. Now, Jerry, let us hear it."

"I will. He won't drink *two tumblers* of punch runnin'; that is, one afther the other."

"No," observed Art, "I will not; do you want me to break the pledge?"

"Sure," said Jerry, "this is not breaking the pledge—it's only for a wager."

"No matther," said Art; "it's a thing I won't do."

"I'll tell you what, Jerry," said Toal; "I'll hould you another pound now, that *I* do a thing to-night that Art won't do; an' that, like your own wager, every one in the room *can* do."

"Done," said the other, "taking out the pound note, and placing it in Mooney's hand—Toal following his example.

"Scaddhan," said Toal, "go an' bring *me* two tumblers of good strong punch. I'm a Totaler as well as Art, boys. Be off, Scaddhan."

"By Japers," said Tom Whiskey, as if to himself—looking at the same time as if he were perfectly amazed at the circumstance—"the little fellow has more spunk than Maguire, ould blood an' all! Oh, holy Moses; afther that, what will the world come to!"

Art heard the soliloquy of Whiskey, and looked about him with an air of peculiar meaning. His pride—his shallow, weak, contemptible pride was up, whilst the honest pride that is never separated from firmness and integrity, was cast aside and forgotten. Scaddhan came in, and placing the two tumblers before Toal, that worthy immediately emptied first one of them, and then the other.

"The last two pounds are yours," said Jerry; "Mooney, give them to him."

Art, whose vanity was still smarting under the artful soliloquy of Tom Whiskey, now started to his feet, and exclaimed—

"No, Jerry, the money's not his yet. Barny, bring in two tumblers. What one may do another may do; and as Jerry says, why it's only for a wager. At any rate, I, or one o' my blood was never done out, and never will."

"By Japers," said Whiskey, "I knew he wouldn't let himself be bate. I knew when it came to the push he wouldn't."

"Well Barny," said Toal, "don't make them strong for him, for they might get into his head; he hasn't a good head, any way—let them be rather wake, Barny."

"No," said Art, "let them be as strong as his, and stronger, Barny; and lose no time about it."

"I had betther colour them," said Barny, "an' the people about the place 'ill think it's cordial still."

"Colour the devil," replied Art; "put no colourin' on them. Do you think I'm afeard of any one, or any colours?"

"You afeard of any one," exclaimed Tom Whiskey; "one o' the ould Maguires afeard! ha ha, ha!—that 'ud be good!"

Art, when the tumblers came in, drank off first one, which he had no sooner emptied, than he shivered into pieces against the grate; he then emptied the other, which shared the same fate.

"Now," said he to Barny, "bring me a third one; I'll let yez see what a Maguire is."

The third, on making its appearance, was immediately drained, and shivered like the others—for the consciousness of acting wrong, in spite of his own resolution, almost drove him mad. Of what occurred subsequently in the public house, it is not necessary to give any account, especially as we must follow Art home—simply premising,

before we do so, that the fact of "Art Maguire having broken the pledge," had been known that very night to almost all Ballykeerin—thanks to the industry of Toal Finigan, and his other friends.

His unhappy wife, after their conversation that evening, experienced one of those strange, unaccountable presentiments or impressions which every one, more or less, has frequently felt. Until lately he had not often gone out at night, because it was not until lately that the clique began to re-assemble in Barney Scaddhan's. 'Tis true the feeling on her part was involuntary, but on that very account it was the more distressing; her principal apprehension of danger to him was occasioned by his intimacy with Toal Finigan, who, in spite of all her warnings and admonitions, contrived, by the sweetness of his tongue, to hold his ground with him, and maintain his good opinion. Indeed, any one who could flatter, wheedle, and play upon his vanity successfully, was sure to do this; but nobody could do it with such adroitness as Toal Finigan.

It is wonderful how impressions are caught by the young from those who are older and have more experience than themselves. Little Atty, who had heard the conversation already detailed, begged his mammy not to send him to bed that night until his father would come home, especially as Mat Mulrennan, an in-door apprentice, who had been permitted that evening to go to see his

family, had not returned, and he wished, he said, to sit up and let him in. The mother was rather satisfied, than otherwise, that the boy should sit up with her, especially as all the other children and the servants had gone to bed.

"Mammy," said the boy, "isn't it a great comfort for us to be as we are now, and to know that my father can never get drunk again?"

"It is indeed, Atty;" and yet she said so with a doubting, if not an apprehensive heart.

"He'll never beat you more, mammy, now?"

"No, darlin'; nor he never did, barrin' when he didn't know what he was doin'."

"That is when he was drunk, mammy?"

"Yes, Atty dear."

"Well, isn't it a great thing that he can never get drunk any more, mammy; and never beat you any more; and isn't it curious, too, how he never yet bate *me*?"

"You, darlin'? oh no, he would rather cut his arm off than rise it to you, Atty dear; and it's well that you are so good a boy as you are—for I'm afeard, Atty, that even if you deserved to be corrected, he wouldn't do it."

"But what 'ud we all do widout my father, mammy? If any thing happened to him I think I'd die. I'd like to die if *he* was to go."

"Why, darlin'?"

"Bekase, you know, he'd go to heaven, and I'd like to be wid him; sure he'd miss *me*—his own Atty—wherever he'd be."

“And so you’d lave me and your sisters, Atty, and go to heaven with your father?”

The boy seemed perplexed ; he looked affectionately at his mother, and said—

“No, mammy, I wouldn’t wish to lave you, for then you’d have no son at all ; no, I wouldn’t lave you—I don’t know what I’d do—I’d like to stay wid you, and I’d like to go wid him, I’d—”

“Well, darlin’, you won’t be put to that trial this many a long day, I hope.”

Just then voices were heard at the door, which both recognised as those of Art and Mat Mulrennan the apprentice.

“Now, darling,” said his mother, who observed that the child was pale and drowsy-looking “you may go to bed, I see you are sleepy, Atty, not bein’ accustomed to sit up so late ; kiss me, an’ good night.” He then kissed her, and sought the room where he slept.

Margaret, after the boy had gone, listened a moment and became deadly pale, but she uttered no exclamation ; on the contrary, she set her teeth, and compressed her lips closely together put her hand on the upper part of her forehead, and rose to go to the door. She was not yet certain, but a dreadful terror was over her ? Could it be possible that he was drunk ?—she opened it, and the next moment her husband, in a state of wild intoxication, different from any in which she had ever seen him, came in. He was furious, but his fury appeared to have been di-

rected against the apprentice, in consequence of having returned home so late.

On witnessing with her own eyes the condition in which he returned, all her presentiments flashed on her, and her heart sank down into a state of instant hopelessness and misery.

"Saviour of the world!" she exclaimed, "I and my childre are lost; now, indeed, we are hopeless—oh, never, till now, never till now!" She wept bitterly.

"What are you cryin' for now?" said he; "what are you cryin' for, I say?" he repeated, stamping his feet madly as he spoke; "stop at wanst, I'll have no cry—cryin' what—at—som—ever."

She instantly dried her eyes.

"Wha—what kep that blasted whelp, Mul—Mulrennan, out till now, I say?"

"I don't know indeed, Art."

"You—you don't! you kno—know nothin'; An' now, I'll have a smash, by the—the holy man, I'll—I'll smash every thing in—in the house."

He then took up a chair, which, by one blow against the floor, he crashed to pieces.

"Now," said he, "tha—that's number one; whe—where's that whelp, Mul—Mulrennan, till I pay—pay him for stayin' out so—so late. Send him here, send the skamin' sco—scoundrel here, I bid you."

Margaret, naturally dreading violence, went to

get little Atty to pacify him, as well as to intercede for the apprentice; she immediately returned, and told him the latter was coming. Art, in the mean time, stood a little beyond the fireplace, with a small beech chair in his hand which he had made for Atty, when the boy was only a couple of years old, but which had been given to the other children in succession. He had been first about to break it also, but on looking at it he paused, and said—

“Not this—this is Atty’s, and I won’t break it.”

At that moment Mulrennan entered the room, with Atty behind him, but he had scarcely done so, when Art, with all his strength flung the hard beech chair at his head; the lad, naturally anxious to avoid it, started to one side out of its way, and Atty, whilst in the act of stretching out his arms to run to his father, received the blow which had been designed for the other. It struck him a little above the temple, and he fell, but was not cut. The mother, on witnessing the act, raised her arms and shrieked, but on hearing the heavy, but dull and terrible sound of the blow against the poor boy’s head, the shriek was suspended when half uttered, and she stood, her arms still stretched out, and bent a little upwards, as if she would have supplicated heaven to avert it;—her mouth was half open—her eyes apparently enlarged, and starting as it were out of their sockets; there she stood—for a short time so full of horror as to be incapable properly of comprehend-

ing what had taken place. At length this momentary paralysis of thought passed away, and with all the tender terrors of affection awakened in her heart, she rushed to the insensible boy.— Oh, heavy and miserable night! What pen can pourtray, what language describe, or what imagination conceive, the anguish, the agony of that loving mother, when, on raising her sweet, and beautiful, and most affectionate boy from the ground whereon he lay, that fair head, with its flaxen locks like silk, fell utterly helpless now to this side, and now to that!

“ Art Maguire,” she said, “ fly, fly,”—and she gave him one look; but, great God! what an object presented itself to her at that moment. A man stood before her absolutely hideous with horror; his face but a minute ago so healthy and high-coloured, now ghastly as that of a corpse, his hands held up and clenched, his eyes frightful, his lips drawn back, and his teeth locked with strong and convulsive agony. He uttered not a word, but stood with his wild and gleaming eyes rivetted as if by the force of some awful spell upon his insensible son, his only one, if he was then even that. All at once he fell down without sense or motion, as if a bullet had gone through his heart or his brain, and there lay as insensible as the boy he had loved so well.

All this passed so rapidly that the apprentice, who seemed also to have been paralyzed, had not presence of mind to do anything but look from one person to another with terror and alarm.

"Go," said Margaret at length, "wake up the girls, and then fly—oh, fly—for the doctor!"

The two servant maids, however, had heard enough in her own wild shriek to bring them to this woful scene. They entered as she spoke, and, aided by the apprentice, succeeded with some difficulty in laying their master on his bed, which was in a back room off the parlour.

"In God's name what is all this?" asked one of them, on looking at the insensible bodies of the father and son.

"Help me," Margaret replied, not heeding the question, "help me to lay the treasure of my heart—my breakin' heart—upon his own little bed within, he will not long use it—tendherly, Peggy, oh, Peggy dear, tendherly to the broken flower—broken—broken—broken, never to rise his fair head again; oh, he is dead," she said, in a calm low voice, "my heart tells me that he is dead—see how his limbs hang, how lifeless they hang. My treasure—our treasure—our sweet, lovin', and only little man—our only son sure—our only son is dead—and where, oh where, is the mother's pride out of him now—where is my pride out of him now?"

They laid him gently and tenderly—for even the seryants loved him as if he had been a relation—upon the white counterpane of his own little crib, where he had slept many a sweet and innocent sleep, and played many a lightsome and innocent play with his little sisters. His mother

felt for his pulse, but she could feel no pulse, she kissed his passive lips, and then—oh, woful alternative of affliction!—she turned to his equally insensible father.

“ Oh, ma’am,” said one of the girls who had gone over to look at Art ; “ oh, for God’s sake, ma’am, come here—here is blood comin’ out of the master’s mouth.”

She was at the bed-side in an instant, and there, to deepen her sufferings almost beyond the power of human fortitude, she saw the blood oozing slowly out of his mouth. Both the servants were now weeping and sobbing as if their hearts would break.

“ Oh, mistress dear, one of them exclaimed, seizing her affectionately by both hands, and looking almost distractedly into her face, “ oh, mistress dear, what did you ever do to deserve this ?”

“ I don’t know, Peggy,” she replied, “ unless it was settin’ my father’s commands, and my mother’s, at defiance ; I disobeyed them both, and they died without blessin’ either me or mine. But oh,” she said, clasping her hands, “ ~~how~~ can one poor wake woman’s heart stand all this—a double death—husband and son—son and husband—and I’m but one woman, one poor, feeble, weak woman—but sure,” she added, dropping on her knees, “ the Lord will support me. I am punished, and I hope forgiven, and he will now support me.”

She then briefly, but distractedly, entreated the

divine support, and rose once more with a heart, the fibres of which were pulled asunder as it were, between husband and son, each of whose lips she kissed, having wiped the blood from those of her husband, with a singular blending together of tenderness, distraction, and despair. She went from the one to the other, wringing her hands in dry agony, feeling for life in their hearts and pulses, and kissing their lips with an expression of hopelessness so pitiable and mournful, that the grief of the servants was occasioned more by her sufferings than by the double catastrophe that had occurred.

The doctor's house, as it happened, was not far from their's, and in a very brief period he arrived.

"Heavens! Mrs. Maguire, what has happened?" said he, looking on the two apparently inanimate bodies with alarm.

"*His* father," she said, pointing to the boy, "being in a state of drink, threw a little beech chair at the apprentice here, he stepped aside, as was natural, and the blow struck my treasure there," she said, holding her hand over the spot where he was struck, but not on it; "but, doctor, look at his father, the blood is trickling out of his mouth."

The doctor, after examining into the state of both, told her not to despair—

"Your husband," said he, "who is only in a fit, has broken a blood vessel, I think some small blood vessel is broken, but as for the boy, I can as

yet pronounce no certain opinion upon him. It will be a satisfaction to you, however, to know that he is not dead, but only in a heavy stupor, occasioned by the blow.

It was now that her tears began to flow, and copiously and bitterly they did flow, but as there was still hope, her grief, though bitter, was not that of despair. Ere many minutes the doctor's opinion respecting one of them, at least, was verified. Art opened his eyes, looked wildly about him, and the doctor instantly signed to his wife to calm the violence of her sorrow, and she was calm.

"Margaret," said he, "where's Atty? bring him to me—bring *him* to me!"

"Your son was hurt," replied the doctor, "and has just gone to sleep."

"He is dead," said Art, "he is dead, he will never waken from that sleep—and it was I that killed him!"

"Don't disturb yourself," said the doctor, "as you value your own life and his; you yourself have broken a blood vessel, and there is nothing for you now but quiet and ease."

"He is dead," said his father, "he is dead, and it was I that killed him; or, if he's not dead, I must hear it from his mother's lips."

"Art darlin', he is not dead, but he is very much hurted," she replied; "Art, as you love him, and me, and us all, be guided by the doctor."

"He is not dead," said the doctor; "severely

hurt he is, but not dead. Of that you may rest assured."

So far as regarded Art, the doctor was right ; he had broken only a small blood vessel, and the moment the consequences of his fit had passed away, he was able to get up and walk about, with very little diminution of his strength.

To prevent him from seeing his son, or to conceal the boy's state from him was impossible. He no sooner rose, than with trembling hands, and a frightful terror of what was before him, he went to the little bed on which the being dearest to him on earth lay. He stood for a moment, and looked down upon the boy's beautiful, but motionless face. He first stooped, and putting his mouth to the child's ear, said—

"Atty, Atty"—he then shook his head ; "you see," he added, addressing those who stood about him, "that he doesn't hear *me*—no, he doesn't hear *me*—that ear was never deaf to *me* before, but it's deaf now;" he then seized his hand, and raised it, but it was insensible to his touch, and would have fallen on the bed had he let it go. "You see," he proceeded, "that his hand doesn't know mine any longer! Oh, no, why should it? this is the hand that laid our flower low, so why should he acknowledge it ; yet surely he would forgive his father, if he knew it—oh, he would forgive that father, that ever and always loved him—loved him—loved him ; oh, that's a wake word, a poor wake word. Well,"

he went on, "I will kiss his lips, his blessed lips—oh, many an' many a kiss, many a sweet an' innocent kiss—did I get from them lips, Atty dear, with those little arms, that are now so helpless, clasped about my neck." He then kissed him again and again, but the blessed child's lips did not return the embrace that had never been refused before. Now," said he, "you all see that—you all see that he won't kiss me again, and that is bekaise he can't do it; Atty, Atty," he said, "won't you spake to me? it's I, Atty, sure it's I, Atty dear, your lovin' father, that's callin' you to spake to him. Atty dear, won't you spake to me—do you hear my voice, asthore machree—do you hear your father's voice, that's callin' on you to forgive him?" He paused for a short time, but the child lay insensible and still.

At this moment there was no dry eye present, the very doctor wept; Margaret's grief was loud, she felt every source of love and tenderness for their only boy opened in her unhappy and breaking heart, and was inconsolable;—but then compassion for her husband was strong as her grief. She ran to Art, she flung her arms about his neck, and exclaimed—

"Oh, Art dear, Art dear, be consoled; take consolation if you can, or you will break my heart. Forgive you *asthore*! you, you that would shed your blood for him! don't you know he would forgive you? Sure, I forgive you—his mother,

his poor distracted, heart-broken mother forgives you—in his name I forgive you.” She then threw herself beside the body of her child, and shouted out—“ Atty, our blessed treasure, I have forgiven your father for you—in your blessed name, and in the name of the merciful God that you are now with, I have forgiven your unhappy and heart-broken father—as you would do, if you could, our lost treasure, as you would do.”

“ Oh,” said his father, vehemently, distracted with his horrible affliction ; “ if there was but any one fault of his that I could remimber now, any one failin’ that our treasure had—if I could think of a single spot upon his little heart, it would relieve me ; but, no, no, there’s nothin’ of that kind to remimber against him. Oh, if he wasn’t what he was—if he wasn’t what he was—we might have some little consolation ; but now we’ve none, we’ve none—none !”

As he spoke and wept, which he did with the bitterest anguish of despair, his grief assumed a character that was fearful from the inward effusion of blood, which caused him from time to time to throw it up in red mouthfuls, and when remonstrated with by the doctor upon the danger of allowing himself to be overcome by such excitement—

“ I don’t care,” he shouted, “ if it’s my heart’s blood, I would shed it at any time for *him* ; I don’t care about life now ; what ’ud it be to me widout my son ; widout you, Atty dear, what is

the world or all that's in it to me now! An' when I think of who it was that cut you down—cursed be the hand that gave you that unlucky blow, cursed may it be—cursed be them that tempted me to drink—cursed may the drink be that made me as I was, and cursed of God may I be that——”

“Art, Art,” exclaimed Margaret, “anything but that; remember there's a God above—don't blaspheme;—we have enough to suffer widout havin' to answer for *that*.”

He paused at her words, and as soon as the paroxysm was over, he sunk by fits into a gloomy silence, or walked from room to room, wringing his hands and beating his head, in a state of furious distraction, very nearly bordering on insanity.

The next morning, we need scarcely assure our readers that, as the newspapers have it, a great and painful sensation had been produced through the town of Ballykeerin by the circumstances which we have related:—

“Art Maguire had broken the pledge, gone home drunk, and killed his only son by the blow of an iron bar on the head; the crowner has been sent for, an' plaise God we'll have a full account of it all.”

In part of this, however, common fame, as she usually is, was mistaken; the boy was not killed, neither did he then die. On the third day, about eight o'clock in the evening, he opened his eyes,

and his mother, who was scarcely ever a moment from his bed-side, having observed the fact, approached him with hopes almost as deep as those of heaven itself in her heart, and in a voice soft and affectionate as ever melted into a human ear, she whispered—

“Atty, treasure of my heart, how do you feel?”

The child made no reply, but as his eye had not met her’s, and as she had whispered very low, it was likely, she thought, that he had not heard her.

“I will bring his father,” said she, “for if he will know or spake to any one, he will spake to *him*.”

She found Art walking about, as he had done almost ever since the unhappy accident, and running to him with a gush of joyful tears, she threw her arms about his neck, and kissing him, said—

“Blessed be the Almighty, Art—” but she paused, “oh, great God, Art, what is this! merciful heaven, do I smell whiskey on you?”

“You do,” he replied, “it’s in vain, I can’t live—I’d die widout it; it’s in vain, Margaret, to spake—if I don’t get it to deaden my grief I’ll die: but, what wor you goin’ to tell me?” he added eagerly.

She burst into tears.

“Oh, Art,” said she, “how my heart has sunk in spite of the good news I have for you.”

the same day, and the next morning, the 10th, he was taken ill, and continued so till the 12th, when he died. He was buried in the church of St. Andrew, in the city of London, on the 13th. He was a man of a very liberal and generous mind, and a very warm and affectionate heart. He was a man of a very liberal and generous mind, and a very warm and affectionate heart. He was a man of a very liberal and generous mind, and a very warm and affectionate heart.

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"In God's name," he asked, "what is it? is our darlin' betther?"

"He is," she replied, "he has opened his eyes this minute, and I want you to spake to him."

They both entered stealthily, and to their inexpressible delight heard the child's voice; they paused,—breathlessly paused,—and heard him utter in a low sweet voice, the following words—

"Daddy, won't you come to bed wid *me*, wid *your own Atty*?"

This he repeated twice or thrice before they approached him, but when they did, although his eye turned from one to another, it was vacant, and betrayed no signs whatsoever of recognition.

Their hearts sank again, but the mother, whose hope was strong and active as her affection, said—

"Blessed be the Almighty that he is able even to speak; but he's not well enough to know us yet."

This was unhappily too true, for although they spoke to him, and placed themselves before him by turns, yet it was all in vain; the child knew neither them nor any one else. Such, in fact, was now their calamity, as a few weeks proved. The father by that unhappy blow did not kill his body, but he killed his mind; he arose from his bed a mild, placid, harmless idiot, silent and inoffensive—the only words he was almost heard to utter, with rare exceptions, being those which had been in his mind when he was dealt the woful blow;—"daddy, won't you come to bed wid *me*,

wid *your own Atty ?*" and these he pronounced as correctly as ever, uttering them with the same emphasis of affection which had marked them before his early reason had been so unhappily destroyed.

Now, even up to that period, and in spite of this great calamity, it was not too late for Art Maguire to retrieve himself, or still to maintain the position which he had regained. The misfortune which befel his child ought to have shocked him into an invincible detestation of all intoxicating liquors, as it would most men ; instead of that, however, it drove him back to them. He had contracted a pernicious habit of diminishing the importance of *first errors*, because they appeared trivial in themselves ; he had never permitted himself to reason against his propensities, unless through the indulgent medium of his own vanity, or an overweening presumption in the confidence of his moral strength, contrary to the impressive experience of his real weakness. His virtues were many, and his foibles few ; yet, few as they were, our readers perceive that, in consequence of his indulging them, they proved the bane of his life and happiness. They need not be surprised then to hear, that, from the want of any self-sustaining power in himself, he fell into the use of liquor again ; he said he could not live without it, but then he did not make the experiment ; for he took every sophistry that appeared to make in his favour for granted. He lived, if it could be called

life, for two years and a half after this melancholy accident, but without the spring or energy necessary to maintain his position, or conduct his business, which declined as rapidly as he did himself. He and his family were once more reduced to absolute beggary, until in the course of events they found a poor-house to receive them. Art was seldom without a reason to justify his conduct, and it matters not how feeble that reason might be, he always deemed it sufficiently strong to satisfy himself; for instance, he often told his wife that if Atty had recovered sound in body and mind he had determined never again to taste liquor; but," said he, "when I seen my darlin's mind gone, I couldn't stand it without the drop of drink to keep my heart an' spirits up." He died of consumption in the work-house of Ballykeerin, and there could not be a stronger proof of the fallacy with which he reasoned than the gratifying fact, that he had not been more than two months dead when his son recovered his reason, to the inexpressible joy of his mother; so that had he followed up his own sense of what was right, he would have lived to see his most sanguine wishes, with regard to his son, accomplished, and perhaps have still been able to enjoy a comparatively long and happy life.

On the morning of the day on which he died, although not suffering much from pain, he seemed to feel an impression that his end was at hand.— It is due to him to say here that he had for

months before his death been deeply and sincerely penitent, and that he was not only sensible of the vanity and errors which had occasioned his fall from integrity, and cut him off in the prime of life, but also felt his heart sustained by the divine consolations of religion. Father Costelloe was earnest and unremitting in his spiritual attentions to him, and certainly had the gratification of knowing that he felt death to be in his case not merely a release from all his cares and sorrows, but a passport into that life where the weary are at rest.

About twelve o'clock in the forenoon he asked to see his wife—his own Margaret—and his children, but above all, his blessed Atty—for such was the epithet he had ever annexed to his name since the night of the melancholy accident. In a few minutes the sorrowful group appeared, his mother leading the unconscious boy by the hand, for he knew not where he was. Art lay, or rather reclined on the bed, supported by two bolsters; his visage was pale, but the general expression of his face was calm, mild, and sorrowful; although his words were distinct, his voice was low and feeble, and every now and then impeded by a short catch—for to cough he was literally unable.

“Margaret,” said he, “come to me, come to me now,” and he feebly received her hand in his; “I feel that afther all the warfare of this poor life, afther all our love and our sorrow, I am goin’ to part wid you and our childre at last.”

"Oh, Art darlin', I can think of nothing now, *asthore*, but our love," she replied, bursting into a flood of tears, in which she was joined by the children—Atty, the unconscious Atty, only excepted.

"An' I can think of little else," said he, "than our sorrows and our sufferins, an' all the woful evil that I brought upon you and them."

"Darlin'," she replied, "it's a consolation to yourself as it is to us, that whatever your errors wor you've repented for them; death is not frightful to you, glory be to God!"

"No," said he, looking upwards, and clasping his worn hands; "I am resigned to the will of my good and merciful God, for in him is my hope an trust. Christ, by his precious blood, has taken away my sins, for you know I have been a great sinner;" he then closed his eyes for a few minutes, but his lips were moving as if in prayer. "Yes, Margaret," he again proceeded, "I am goin' to lave you all at last; I feel it—I can't say that I'll love you no more, for I think that even in heaven I couldn't forget you; but I'll never more lave you a sore heart, as I often did—I'll never bring the bitther tear to your eye—the hue of care to your face, or the pang of grief an' misery to your heart again—thank God I will not; all my follies, all my weaknesses, and all my crimes—"

"Art," said his wife, wringing her hands, and sobbing as if her heart would break, "if you wish me to be firm, and to set our childre an example

of courage, now that it's so much wanted, oh, don't spake as you do—my heart cannot stand it."

"Well, no," said he, "I won't; but when I think of what I *might* be this day, and of what I *am*—when I think of what *you* and *our childre* might be—an' when I see what *you are*—and all through my means—when I think of this, Margaret dear, an' that I'm torn away from you and them in the very prime of life—but," he added, turning hastily from that view of his situation, "God is good and merciful, an' that is my hope."

"Let it be so, Art dear," replied Margaret. "As for us, God will take care of us; and in him we will put our trust, too. Remember that he is the God and father of the widow an' the orphan."

He here appeared to be getting very weak, but in a minute or two he rallied a little, and said, whilst his eye, which was now becoming heavy, sought about until it became fixed upon his son—

"Margaret, bring *him* to me."

She took the boy by the hand, and led him over to the bed side.

"Put his hand in mine," said he, "put his blessed hand in mine."

She did so, and Art looked long and steadily upon the face of his child.

"Margaret," said he, "you know that durin' all my wild and sinful coorses, I always wore the

lock of hair you gave me when we were young next my heart—my poor weak heart.”

Margaret buried her face in her hands, and for some time could not reply.

“I don’t wish, darlin’,” said he, “to cause you sorrow—you will have too much of that; but I ask it as a favour—the last from my lips—that you will now cut off a lock of *his* hair—his fair hair—an’ put it along with your own upon my heart; it’s all I’ll have of you both in the grave where I’ll sleep; and, Margaret, do it now—oh, do it soon.”

Margaret, who always carried scissors hanging by her pocket, took them out, and cutting a long abundant lock of the boy’s hair, she tenderly placed it where he wished, in a little three-cornered bit of black silk that was suspended from his neck, and lay upon his heart.

“Is it done?” said he.

“It is done,” she replied as well as she could.

“This, you know, is to lie on my heart,” said he, “when I’m in my grave; you won’t forget that!”

“No—oh, no, no; but, merciful God, support me! for Art, my husband, my life, I don’t know how I’ll part with you.”

“Well, may God bless you for ever, my darlin’ wife, and support you and my orphans! Bring them here.”

They were then brought over, and in a very feeble voice he blessed them also.

"Now, forgive me all," said he, "FORGIVE ME ALL!"

But, indeed, we cannot paint the tenderness and indescribable affliction of his wife and children whilst uttering their forgiveness of all his offences against them, as he himself termed it. In the mean time he kept his son close by him, nor would he suffer him to go one moment from his reach.

"Atty," said he, in a low voice, which was rapidly sinking ;—"put his cheek over to mine," he added to his wife, "then raise my right arm, an' put it about his neck. Atty," he proceeded, "won't you give me one last word before I depart?"

His wife observed that as he spoke a large tear trickled down his cheek. Now, the boy was never in the habit of speaking when he was spoken to, or of speaking at all, with the exception of the words we have already given. On this occasion, however, whether the matter was a coincidence or not it is difficult to say, he said in a quiet low voice, as if imitating his father's—

"Daddy, won't you come to bed for *me*, for *your own Atty*?"

The reply was very low, but still quite audible—

"Yes, darlin', I—I will—I will for *you*, Atty."

The child said no more, neither did his father ; and when the sorrowing wife, struck by the still-

ness which for a minute or two succeeded the words, went to remove the boy, she found that his father's spirit had gone to that world where, we firmly trust, his errors, and follies, and sins have been forgiven. Whilst taking the boy away, she looked upon her husband's face, and there still lay the large tear of love and repentance. She stooped down—she kissed it—and it was no longer there.

There is now little to be added, unless to inform those who may take an interest in the fate of his wife and children, that his son soon afterwards was perfectly restored to the use of his reason, and that in the month of last September he was apprenticed in the city of Dublin to a respectable trade, where he is conducting himself with steadiness and propriety; and we trust that, should he ever read this truthful account of his unhappy father, he will imitate his virtues, and learn to avoid the vanities and weaknesses by which he brought his family to destitution and misery, and himself to a premature grave.

With respect to his brother Frank, whom his irreclaimable dissipation drove out of the country, we are able to gratify our readers by saying that he got happily married in America, where he is now a wealthy man, in prosperous business, and very highly respected.

Margaret, in consequence of her admirable character, was appointed to the situation of head nurse in the Ballykeerin Hospital, and it will not

surprise our readers to hear that she gains and retains the respect and good will of all who know her, and that the emoluments of her situation are sufficient, through her prudence and economy, to keep her children comfortable and happy.

Kind reader, is it necessary that we should recapitulate the moral we proposed to show in this true but melancholy narrative? We trust not. If it be not sufficiently obvious, we can only say it was our earnest intention that it should be so. At all events, whether you be a Teetotaler, or a man carried away by the pernicious love of intoxicating liquors, think upon the fate of Art Maguire, and do not imitate the errors of his life as you find them laid before you in this simple narrative of "THE BROKEN PLEDGE."

THE END.



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